

MILITARY ILLUSTRATED

□ PAST & PRESENT □

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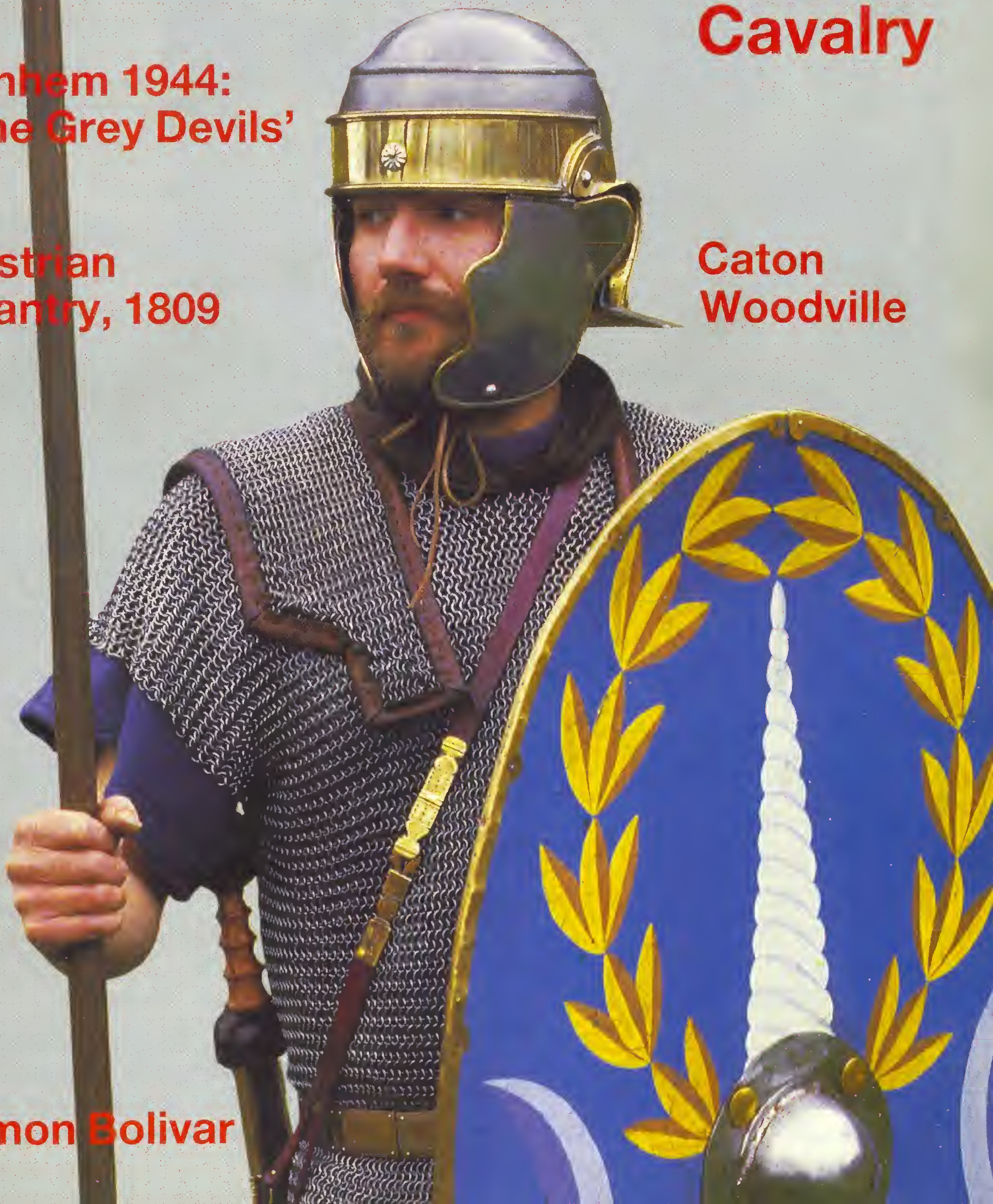
**Roman
Cavalry**

**Arnhem 1944:
'The Grey Devils'**

**Austrian
Infantry, 1809**

**Caton
Woodville**

Simon Bolivar



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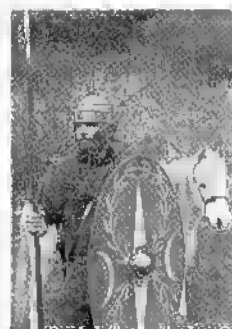
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Our cover illustration of a 'reconstructed' 1st century Roman cavalryman was kindly arranged by the Ermine Street Guard. See pp.21 and 26.

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EDITORIAL

We are delighted to welcome **Peter Connolly** to our columns in this issue. Well-known for his series of superb books on Graeco-Roman warfare since the runaway success of his first Roman Army title in 1975, Peter is an illustrator whose fascination for his subject has led him into even deeper research. In 1986 he won the Times Educational prize for his 'The Legend of Odysseus'; and in 1985 he was rewarded for his research work when he was elected a Fellow of the Society of Antiquaries, and was later given an honorary research fellowship at the Institute of Archaeology, University College, London. Still a working illustrator and writer, Peter lectures widely; his main interest remains Italic, Celtic and Roman military equipment.

Ron Poulter, born in London in 1946, currently works for the British Library, but his past career includes stints with *Tradition* magazine, and the costumiers Bernians & Nathans, where he worked on films such as *Patton* and *Waterloo*. His illustrations have appeared in the UK, the USA and South America, and he has also published articles on his subjects of special interest: South American armies pre-1900, Renaissance armies, and the British in North America 1750-83.

Ian Fletcher, born in 1957, has a long-standing interest in British military history and particularly in Wellington's army. He has published many articles, and in 1984 his first book — *In Hell Before Daylight*, a detailed study of the siege of Badajoz, 1812.

Amphibious rally

We are asked to mention that an International Amphibious Vehicles Rally will take place between 31 July and 7 August, meeting at Mailstone on the 31st and including runs on the Thames and the Lee and a display at Duxford on the 7th. Interested DUKW owners and other well-footed fanatics can contact M. Stallwood, Barton Farm, Bethesda, Kent (tel. 023382-217).

Brown Bess winner

The winner of our draw for an original 'Brown Bess' (see below) is subscriber Richard Van Hoek of Jackson Heights, NY. A 56-year-old former US Navy reserve officer who saw three years' active duty in Korean wars, Mr. Van Hoek is now a commercial artist in the advertising field. An avid reader, modeller, and member of many military interest societies, Mr. Van Hoek is clearly a man of sound judgement: he is kind enough to



Peter Connolly



Ian Fletcher



Richard van Hoek



Ron Poulter

derline 'All' to be '...absolutely first rate: excellent articles, good research, and wonderful illustration and art direction...'. We thank him for his kind remarks, and wish him years of enjoyment of his prize.

Runners-up who won a free year's subscription extension were: Iain MacKenzie, R.J. Snell, George E. West, Marcus Shaw, G.W. Asprey, Norman Newling, Amir Widen, Marko Zlatich, and Stephen Hampstead.

Sitrep

It seems impossible, but our last issue marked two years' publication. In that time we have published 75 main articles by 45 writers and illustrators. Sincere thanks to all these, and to the advertisers, subscribers and occasional buyers who have supported us. Onwards into Year 3...

Errata

In 'MI' No.11, p.26, the picture attributions should be to *Water Richards' His Majesty's Territorial Army*. In the caption on p.41, 'MI' No.12, for 'B/b is the classic 15th C type', read 'A/a is the classic...'

MI

Video Releases:

- 'Platoon' (RCA/Columbia: 15)
- 'The Alamo — 13 Days to Glory' (Virgin: PG)
- 'The Battle of Mortimer's Cross' (Spot Film & Video)

Oliver Stone's *Platoon* (1986) will be remembered as the film which initiated the recent wave of

ON THE SCREEN

Hollywood productions which have treated the Vietnam War more objectively and realistically than has been possible in the past. Its phenomenal critical and box-office

success has obscured the fact that it took Stone ten years to raise the finance, eventually obtaining it through the British company Hemdale. Stone also wrote the film,

basin it on his own experiences as a subaltern infantry private in the 25th 'Tropic Lightning' Division.

The story concerns the experiences of an idealistic volunteer, Chris Taylor (Charlie Sheen) from his arrival in Vietnam in 1967 to his departure a year later. Stationed near the Cambodian border, Taylor soon finds himself on exhausting patrols through the jungle hills; on night ambushes in monsoon rain; and tasting action in small-scale and fairly bewildering skirmishes. Eventually his platoon is involved in a full-scale battle as it tries to block the path of the North Vietnamese 141st Regiment, and takes heavy casualties (the director himself takes a bit-part as a field officer whose command post is destroyed by an NVA sapper's satchel charge).

Stone handles the action scenes with great skill: rarely have the travails of a night ambush, or the shockingly sudden close-quarter savagery of jungle combat been so well conveyed. Although the battle scene inevitably suffers from the film-maker's visual need to turn almost every explosion into a pyrotechnic display, the overall impression is more realistic than in many recent films. Two other criticisms have been made: that the character of the soldiers depicted recalls, in its cynicism and poor morale, the army of 1969/70 rather than that of 1967; and that the use of two contrasting NCOs as poles of attraction for the 'good' and 'bad'

RICHARD VAN HOEK SENT US \$30...

Subscriber Richard van Hoek of New York is the winner of our 1988 draw. He didn't have to fill out a coupon; he didn't have to answer a quiz; he didn't have to think up a slogan. All he had to do was take out a subscription to 'Military Illustrated'. And he got an original 1790s Short Land Service 'Brown Bess' flintlock musket to hang over his fireplace...

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...in addition, of course, to six issues of the world's finest English-language journal of uniform and equipment history, from the ancients to the present day, delivered direct to his door. We think he made a wise decision. So does he. Food for thought, gentlemen?

characters in the platoon is too emblematic. There is some force in both views, but neither point seriously weakens the film.

Stone's work is probably most impressive in the film's central episode: the loss of control, among soldiers stressed by booby-trap casualties and the unseen presence of implacable enemies, during the search of a villager suspected of Vietcong sympathies. We have become sadly familiar with the mere sensationalising of murder and rape in war; by contrast, Stone's more chilling achievement is to orchestrate with absolute credibility the interplay of emotions which can degenerate an unbridled atrocity.

In various sequences we see the indifference of 'short-timers' towards 'FNGs'; the killing of GIs by 'friendly fire' due to incompetence; and the indulgence in booze and pot by troops hungry for temporary relief from fear, exhaustion and boredom. Whenever we see the well-trained NVA regulars they are, by contrast, dangerous, resourceful and highly motivated. The film does not examine why America went to war in Vietnam, but stays close to its chosen platoon-level viewpoint; and surpasses any previous film in its examination of the pressures in which the American soldier was subjected, and his reaction to them.

The *Alamo* is a television movie made in 1986 to coincide with the 150th anniversary of the siege. It is based on Lon Tinkle's account *Thirteen Days to Glory*, first published in 1958, which told the story from the day Santa Anna's forces arrived in San Antonio to the final massacre 12 days later. The film is released in two parts, lasting three hours in total. The scriptwriters have played safe by remaining reasonably faithful to the literary source; the result avoids irrelevant subplots, but fails to challenge those myths which have become accepted as fact.

The film is poorly cast, betraying its made-for-TV origins. The sexagenarians James Arness and Brian Keith are too old to play James Bowie and Davy Crockett, who were aged 40 and 50 at the time, and Alec Baldwin is too lightweight an actor to carry the crucial role of Col. Travis. A greater emphasis than usual is given to the Mexicans: Raul Julia is physically right as the tall, handsome Gen. Lopez de Santa Anna, and well conveys his ruthlessness and arrogance. The curious inclusion of a fictional English 'Col. Black' on his staff appears to be an attempt to draw an analogy between the Texans' fight for independence and the American Revolution.

The production is well mounted and utilises the mission and San Antonio sets from John Wayne's *The Alamo* (1960). Shots of the Mexican army on the march, and some of the battle scenes, have been lifted from Frank Lloyd's *The Last Command* (1955), electronically reprocessed to match modern colour film stock. Unfortunately, Burt Kennedy's routine direction, ageing

stars and an unmemorable score preclude any emotional impact, and remind one of how good Wayne's version was almost 30 years ago.

Our last film is a low-budget production of feeble length, released directly onto video. *The Battle of Mortimer's Cross* tells the story of a decisive but poorly documented battle which took place in Herefordshire during the Wars of the Roses. An army of Welsh, Irish and French mercenaries led by Jasper Tudor, Earl of Pembroke invaded the English-Welsh border marches with the intention of laying waste the Yorkist power centres of Wigmore and Ludlow castles. Against them an army of marchmen was led by the 19-year-old Edward Mortimer (or Mortimor), Earl of March and soon to be King Edward IV. The battle was fought on Candlemass Day, 2 February 1461, and was preceded by a rare meteorological phenomenon, 'parhelion' — giving the appearance of three suns in the sky.

The film is conceived as a drama-documentary in three parts. A lengthy prologue, milising live

action, paintings and models, explains the rivalry between the houses of York and Lancaster for the throne of England. The second part, the story of the battle, is mainly live action; using the resources of more than 20 medieval combat societies to provide the necessary extras, it inevitably suffers from a wide variation in the quality of the costumes. Nevertheless, the sequence is impressive enough for a feature film costing many times this budget: swords clash on armour, arrows whistle through the air, and bombards roar during a 20-minute battle scene.

Without the benefit of professional actors, writer/director Richard Weaver has wisely opted to keep direct dialogue to a minimum, and relies on a fictional Bowman to provide the narration. Consequently Prier Gray, who plays Edward, has little to do other than strike heroic postures and swing a sword. The final part is a brief epilogue which relates the aftermath of the battle and its historical significance.

The film includes interesting detail on arms and armour, and the preparations for battle at that time. Much of it was filmed at the original locations, including the actual battle site near the River Lugg. A well-chosen score is supplemented by a lively song written for the film. It makes an excellent introduction to the Wars of the Roses, both informative and entertaining, and well able to withstand repeated viewings. Interested readers should write to Spot Film & Video Prescriptions at 15 School Lane, Leominster, Herefordshire HR6 8AA.

Stephen J. Greenhill

Chris Taylor (Charlie Sheen) 'humps his muck' up and down the jungle hills of the Vietnam-Cambodia border during the early sequences of Oliver Stone's *Platoon*.



THE AUCTION SCENE

The path of the military collector becomes daily more labyrinthine. While still reeling from the potential threat of the 1988 Firearms Amendment Bill, he finds a new danger looming: the Criminal Justice Bill. The title would not suggest that there is anything there to worry the serious, law-abiding collector; but be warned — if you collect edged weapons you are certainly in danger. The clause which had largely passed unnoticed by collectors and armoursmen alike is Part XI, Sect. 128-131, which deals with 'any article which has a blade or is sharply pointed'. The proposed Act would make it an offence to have in a public place any such item, and this includes a penknife with a blade more than 3 ins. long or a knife which locks the blade in position,

The only defence would be 'good reason or lawful authority'. The only excuses suggested in the Bill are that the object is used for work, for religious reasons, or is part of a national costume.

Thus a collector purchasing a sword, bayonet, dagger, or other bladed or pointed article at auction would be at risk the moment he stepped into the street with his purchase. Indeed, it could even be argued that the auction house is itself a public place, and as such the Act would apply on the premises! Should the collector be stripped for any reason he would have to prove 'good reason or lawful authority' for having his purchase in his possession. To claim that he was a collector might satisfy the constable; but how does one prove that claim,

if called upon to do so? It could well involve a prior visit to his home — and possibly even being held at the police station while the checks were made.

If the collector is beginning to feel concerned at this point, there is worse to come. The same Bill gives the Home Secretary powers to prohibit certain edged weapons simply by naming them. It would then be an offence to purchase, manufacture, hire or lend any of the listed items. While no one would quarrel with the attempt to prevent crime, and the too-frequent rise of knives in the streets, some of the weapons listed have been made for centuries, and antique examples are no uncommon. There is no exception: all fall under the ban.

Museum or collectors who have such items would not be guilty of an offence by possessing them; but what do they do with them? They may not lend them to another museum; they may not sell them; apparently, the only legal way to

dispose of them is to destroy them! Later through it is, the major museums are making approaches to the Home Office, and it is to be hoped that the auction houses and collectors will do the same. Perhaps the Act could include an exclusion clause for antiques, or could explicitly accept that collecting is a 'good reason or lawful excuse'.

Representations seem to have had some success as far as the Firearms Amendment Bill is concerned; but the actual wording of the Bill is largely unchanged. The amendments to it are apparently to be handled mostly by means of instructions to the police on the way that they are to interpret the Act. Thus it is possible — nay, likely — that collectors in different parts of the country will receive different advice and different treatment, which will depend entirely on where they live. Nor a cheering prospect...

continued on page 8

It was a sad shock to us to learn, just as our last issue closed for press, of the sudden death at his Bourne-mouth home on 13 February 1988 of the artist, illustrator and cartoonist Ronald Embleton.

Although his work had not yet appeared in *MI*, we had worked with Ron on other projects — notably the two *Roman Men-at-Arms* titles which he illustrated, and his four splendid cartoon posters for the series. He was a valued friend of many years' standing; he was also a craftsman of great skill and wide talents, whose reputation stood high even among that impressive generation of British illustrators whose work began to attract attention in the 1950s.

Born in London in 1930, Ron came of a family with no known artistic history; in later years he took pleasure in the discovery that his ancestors included many East End carpenters and wheelwrights. Nevertheless, it cannot be accidental that both his younger brother Gerry and his daughter Gillian are gifted and successful artists in various mediums. Ron studied during the war years at South East Essex Technical College and School of Art, under the painter David Bomberg. His first comic strip work was published when he was 17; and, after a spell with the 1st Suffolks in Malaya during the Emergency, he returned to establish himself during the 1950s and 1960s as a successful and prolific cartoonist and strip artist.

The obituaries in the broadsheets have tended to concentrate on this aspect of his career, and his influence and contribution were certainly considerable. Nevertheless, one of Ron's most endearing qualities was his refusal — despite a well-earned international reputation in a demanding discipline — to take either his work or himself too seriously. He would have been wryly astonished at the dozens of column inches devoted to his obituaries in

Ronald Embleton



Ronald Sydney Embleton
6 October 1930 – 13 February 1988

the *Times*, *Daily Telegraph*, *Guardian* and *Independent*; and we can hear his crow of mockery at some of the over-solemn tosh written by well-meaning commentators who have tried to present his comic strip work as High Art. Ron drew this stuff for a living; took pride in his professional competence; and then forgot it. He distrusted complacency, and regularly made large bonfires of his past work.

In parallel with his commercial illustration he developed an accomplished oil painting technique, and exhibited regularly. An enthus-

siastic member of the historic London Sketch Club, he was elected to the Royal Institute of Oil Painters on his thirtieth birthday, and also became a member of the National Society of Painters and Sculptors. He probably took most pleasure in his loving watercolours of English landscapes and characters.

During the 1960s he concentrated on more detailed historical illustration, and became a regular contributor to the children's magazines *Look and Learn* and *Finding Out*. He wrote and illustrated a number of extended series

on the early history of North America; the Indians, Rangers and soldiers of the mid-18th century fascinated him, and he researched them avidly. Again, however, he was always on guard against professional pomposity. He knew how very few, and how ambiguous, are our primary sources for the exact appearance of historical characters, and was always more interested in conveying the 'feel' of a period than in arguing over how many buttons a man wore on his coat.

Ron's bounding imagination and dry wit reached a wide audience in the 1970s when — at first in collaboration with the writer Frederic Mullally, and later alone — he produced for *Penthouse* magazine the Rabelaisian satirical comic strip *Oh, Wicked Wanda!* From 1973 to 1980 *Wanda* provided him with a stage upon which fictional and historical characters, present-day political and media personalities, and the creatures of his own uninhibited imagination cavorted in the pneumatic company of fantasy beauties. From 1980 onwards his *Sweet Chastity* strip, latterly in the US edition of *Penthouse*, pursued the same formula.

Commissioned in 1974 to undertake a series of paintings of Charles Dickens' characters for *This England* magazine, Ron produced twenty such studies over five years; and continued thereafter to produce similar work based upon classics of English literature. The mid-1970s also saw the first of his prints depicting Edwardian children's street games, which enjoyed enormous popularity and wide reproduction, as did a later series on street traders of the same period. His Edwardian and Dickens paintings have also been widely published as Eversheds calendars. For the same client he produced a series of paintings of heavy horses, and at the time of his death was working on a projected series on 'Coaching Days'.

Ron illustrated a large number of children's books, ranging from traditional fairy tales to classics such as *The Wind in the Willows*. Always prolific and versatile, he had in recent years returned to regular black-and-white newspaper strip work, illustrating 'how-to' strips on angling and skiing in the *Daily Express* and *Sunday Express*. He enjoyed the professional challenge of illustrating two sports of which he had no personal experience at all; and joked that he was responsible for fishermen all over Britain peering into the weedy depths in search of nine-finned carp, and for 400 amateur skiers all breaking their ankles on the same day.

Readers of this magazine are most likely to have encountered Ron's work in the form of his meticulous, vigorous, and extraordinarily popular reconstructions of Roman scenes and sites for the Newcastle publisher Frank Graham. A chance holiday meeting in 1972 led to a fruitful association over many years, during which Ron produced for Graham some eighty colour plates and hundreds of black-and-white drawings. These studies of soldiers and tribesmen, forts and townships appeared as book illustrations, postcards and posters, and reproductions are to be found on sale in virtually every museum and historical site in northern Britain, and elsewhere. They have sold more than five million copies in various formats; and his famous reconstruction of Roman auxiliaries in the latrines of Housesteads Fort has sold a million copies alone. The original paintings in Ron's Roman series continue to be widely exhibited, and never fail to attract enormous interest, particularly among schoolchildren: it is no exaggeration to say that his work has played a major part in popularising the history of Roman Britain among a whole generation.⁽¹⁾

In 1984 Ron was commissioned by the Museum of London to paint reconstruc-



tions of the capital's recently excavated Roman basilica and forum, and the Roman docks at Blackfriars — a challenge which gave him particular satisfaction.

* * *

Ron Embleton was a huge personality, who enjoyed life and loved to share his enjoyment. He was clear-

sighted, honest, generous, and funny; and his loss leaves a wound which will take a long time to heal. We extend our deep sympathy to his widow, Liz, to Gillian and Gerry, and to the rest of his family. Many of us who contribute to 'MI' have lost — at the cruelly early age of 57 — an admitted colleague and an irreplaceable friend.

MCW

Above:
'The man who built the Wall' — by courtesy of Frank Graham, 6 Queen's Terrace, Newcastle-upon-Tyne NE2 2PL.

⁽¹⁾Although Frank Graham have published 14 books exclusively illustrated by Ron Embleton, the single most accessible collection of his Roman work is probably *Hadrian's Wall in the Days of the Romans*, ISBN 085983-177-9, with some 80 colour plates, still in print at £15.00.

Ist Polish Independent Parachute Brigade, 1941-47 (2)



KRZYSTOF BARBARSKI

Part 1 of this article ('MP' No.12) covered the history of the Free Polish parachute brigade; and described and illustrated general uniform practice, headgear, headgear and collar insignia, and shoulder titles. This concluding part covers in some detail the relevant parachute and glider qualification badges; commemorative insignia; and the little-known airborne Independent Grenadier Company.

QUALIFICATION INSIGNIA

The design of the Polish parachute qualification badge was based (apparently without the artist's permission) on the cover illustration of the publisher's advertising brochure for Jozef Kisielewski's book 'Ziemia Gromadzi Prochy'; the artist was Marian Walentynowicz, a well-known Polish illustrator.

The badge, in the form of

Above:

Holland, September 1944: a squad of fully-equipped members of the brigade moving to new positions during Operation 'Market Garden'.

Right:

Brigade commander Maj.Gen. Stanislaw Sosabowski photographed during the Arnhem operation. He wears the Denison smock over Battledress; note that his camouflaged airborne-pattern steel helmet has the later, webbing straps.

a diving eagle, was approved by Order of the Commander-in-Chief and Minister of Defence No.3, Section 30, dated 20 June 1941. The badge appeared in two versions: an ordinary badge for trained parachutists, and a special combat badge for men who had taken part in a combat mission.

Originally the combat version differed from the ordinary badge in that the eagle had its beak and claws gilded; a new version was subsequently approved by Order of the Commander-in-Chief and Minister of Defence No.5, Section 63, dated 20 November 1944. The new combat badge consisted of the original ordinary badge with the addition of a gilt wreath held in the eagle's claws. A total of 1,663 combat badges were awarded for Operation 'Mar-



ket Garden', including those to British liaison officers.

The parachute qualification badge, in common with other Polish specialist insignia (e.g. pilot's wings, signals insignia, etc.) was worn on the left breast above any medal ribbons. Neither the ordinary badge nor the combat version could be awarded honorarily.

Manufacture

The badge was made of a non-ferrous alloy, silver-plated, heavily oxidised and finally lacquered. The rear carried, in impressed lettering, the motto *TOBIE OJCZYZNO* ('For you, my fatherland'), as well as the number of the individual badge. On the combat version the gilded wreath was soldered to the underside of the badge to give the impression of being held in

the eagle's claws. The wreaths were either numbered on the reverse; bore the word *DUPLIKAT*; or were simply plain.

The first batch of badges were produced by the Grupa Techniczna Sztabu Naczelnego Wodza (Polish Military Research) in London. The fixing consisted of a plain round domed nut in white (or in some cases, yellow) metal; or similar, with the name *GR. TECHN. LONDON*.

The second production of the badge was by the Edinburgh firm of Kirkwood and Son. The most characteristic difference between the two manufacturers was that on the London version the space between the eagle's wings was cut to a sharp 'V', while the Edinburgh version had a rounded 'U' shape. The fixing of the second version was either a plain round domed nut in white metal; or, more frequently, a round brass nut bearing the firm's name *KIRKWOOD & SON/EDINBURGH*.

A folded identity card was issued with each badge; when open, its left hand side related to the award of the ordinary badge, and the right hand side to the combat version (see accompanying illustration).

Copies

Needless to say, due to the scarcity of the badge and to the current vogue for collecting badges of 'elite' formations and units, copies of the badge in both versions are being produced. The two most common types encountered are as follows:

1) Cast from a light, soft alloy — in one piece, for the combat version — silver-plated and oxidised, with the wreath gilded. The reverse carries the motto, but has no number. In appearance the badge is an exact copy but, unlike the original, it can easily be bent.

2) The ordinary version, well made in heavy white metal with a very darkly oxidised matt finish. It has the motto on the reverse, but no number. The tip of the left wing is rounded off, as if the original from which the mould was made had been damaged. This version usually has a round domed nut with notched edge, and a washer.

'Home Army' version

Although not strictly falling within the scope of this article, mention must be made here of the combat version of the badge with the silver letters *PIW*, in the form of an 'anchor', in the wreath. These letters were the insignia of the Armia Krajowa (Home Army), the Polish underground movement, the letters standing for *Polska Walcząca* ('Fighting Poland'). This badge, for those parachuted into occupied Poland, is frequently described by collectors and dealers as the 'SOE version'.

While not discounting the possibility that some of those dropped into occupied Poland may have added the Armia Krajowa insignia on their own initiative, the formal approval for this version of the badge was only given by President August Zaleski of the Polish Government-in-Exile on 7 February 1954. This decision was contrary to the wishes of Gen. Sosabowski (and, in his opinion, would have been contrary to the wishes of the

late Gen. Sikorski, who had approved the original badge). Sosabowski considered that all combat missions should be treated on an equal basis, and that only one type of badge should be awarded irrespective of where and when the jump took place. This would certainly appear to be the logical view, if one considers e.g. the Polish Air Force pilot's wings — identical for all pilots, whether of fighter or bomber aircraft, and whatever special mission may or may not have been undertaken.

Due to the late approval of this version, 13 years after the approval of the original badge and nine years after the end of hostilities, it can only be regarded as of an 'ex-service' nature. Apart from

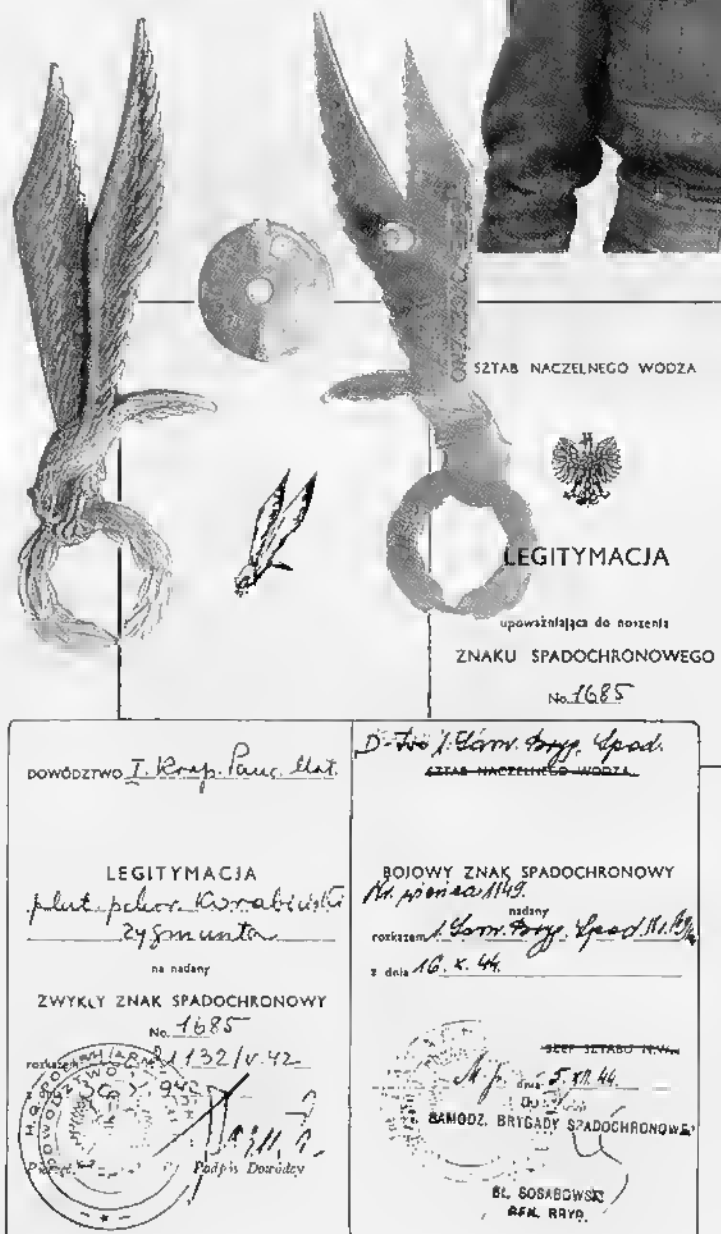
those few cases in which the Armia Krajowa insignia has been attached to a genuine combat badge, the remainder tend to be of the one-piece soft alloy type, as described above.

The glider badge

Order of the Commander-in-Chief and Minister of

Defence No.1, Section 8, dated 15 February 1945, approved the qualification badge for glider-borne troops. The design — by Sosabowski's adjutant, Capt. Tadeusz Sieczkowski — depicted a three-quarter-front view of a glider within an

continued on page 16



Lt. Józef Walasek of the Bdr. Medical Coy. following his preservation with the Order of Virtuti Militari (5th Class) for bravery during the Arnhem operation. Clearly visible is the combat parachute qualification badge; note also the Medical Corps collar patches in dark cherry velvet with dark blue upper edging and metal parachutes.

Centre:

Face and rear of London-made Polish parachute qualification badge, combat version. Note the domed fixing nut marked 'GR. TECHN./LONDON'; the individual badge number '1685' and the motto 'TOBIE OJCZYŹNO' impressed on the rear of the two wings; and the number '1149' impressed on the rear of the combat wreath.

Left:

Outside and inside of folded card recording award of parachute qualification badge and combat wreath illustrated hereabove. The inside left hand page records the award of badge no.1685 to Zygmunt Korabinski as a lance-sergeant/leader officer, and is signed by Gen. Bonna-Spiechowicz, commanding 1 Corps; the right hand page, recording 2nd Lt. Korabinski's award of combat wreath no.1149, is signed by Sosabowski. The card measures 153mm x 113mm.



Plate 1: (left to right): Formation sign of 2nd Cadre Armoured Grenadier Division, approved for wear by Independent Grenadier Coy. but apparently not worn in practice; collar patch of Independent Grenadier Coy., above Special Forces wings worn by company; formation sign of Special Training Centre, Loch Ailort, worn by attached Polish officers.

1

Plate 2: (1) Parachute qualification badge, (2) Glider-borne troops' qualification badge, (3) Commemorative badge, 4th Cadre Rifle Brigade, (4) Combat parachute qualification badge, (5) Combat glider-borne troops' qualification badge, (6) Silver miniature, 4th Cadre Rifle Bde commemorative badge, (7) Unidentified badge associated with the brigade, as discussed in text, (8) Combat parachute qualification badge for those parachuted into occupied Poland, (9) Commemorative badge, Polish Home Army — Armia Krajowa (10)–(12) Lapel badges of the Polish Airborne Forces Association.

Plates 3–6: Original colour transparencies apparently taken during an exercise by men of the brigade at Elhr, 14 June 1943:

Plate 3: Troopmaster wearing Battlecross, shoulder titles, standard webbing, and a version of the original light or 'posur'-grey beret, worn with an embroidered eagle badge — see 'MI' No.12.

Plate 4: Parachutists wearing the 'rubber bungy' training helmet complete with Polish eagle badge in gas-defeating yellow paint, and the sleeveless 'jacket', Parachutists, 1942 Pattern over Bandoliers. The Bren-gunner's first pattern collar patches, light grey with upper edges trimmed yellow and an embroidered white parachute, are clearly visible.

Plate 5: Parachutists unloading a 3in. mortar from its container on the drop-zone, the man on left with the leather sight case slung. Again, the collar patches are visible on the open BD blouse collars. Interestingly, these men wear the steel helmet; the absence of the yellow eagle stencil suggests that it had only very recently been issued.

Plate 6: Radio operators manning an 18 Set, the standard battalion-to-company link.

2



3



5



4

6





Holland, September 1944: group of officers and men of the brigade photographed during a lull in the Arnhem fighting. Typical British airborne combat uniform, with the Poles' grey beret well in evidence.

Right:

Holland, September 1944. a medic and a radio operator, photographed under fire. At left foreground, the medic appears to have splinted his comrade's (broken?) ankle with his sheathed I/S fighting knife.



oval frame. The combat version had a foliate spray added to the underside of the lower half of the frame. The glider and oval frame were of one-piece construction, made of a non-ferrous alloy, silver-plated and heavily oxidised; the spray had a gilded finish. The badge — manufactured by Kirkwood and Son of Edinburgh, and fixed by a round brass nut bearing

the firm's name — was worn on the left breast, above the medal ribbons, as in the case of the parachute qualification badge.

As the majority of troops who went into action as part of the glider lift during Operation 'Market Garden' had been trained as parachutists and thus wore that qualification badge, the brigade commander granted them the combat wreath to that badge. However, those

who took part in the operation but had insufficient or no parachute training received the combat glider badge — a total of only 15 of these being awarded.

Unfortunately, a full record of the numbers of the individual badges awarded has not survived⁽¹⁾. The most comprehensive list available may be found in issue No.3 of the publication *Materialy*, compiled by Jan Lorys (see Source list).

COMMEMORATIVE BADGES

Although the 1st Polish Independent Parachute Brigade itself did not possess a commemorative badge, its immediate predecessor did. Many of the original members of the Parachute Brigade were entitled to the badge of the 4th Cadre Rifle Bde., and in some sense it may be regarded as the commemorative badge of the parachute formation.

⁽¹⁾Queries regarding other badge numbers may be addressed to the author c/o The Sikorski Museum, marked for the attention of the Vice-Curator, although it must be emphasised that it may not prove possible to identify these.

The first steps toward introduction of a commemorative badge for the 4th Cadre Rifle Bde. were taken early in 1941. The design was prepared by 2nd Lt. Stanislaw Kowalczewski, and was based on an idea by L/Sgt. Henryk Munda. Initially the badge was not approved by the Commander-in-Chief, as at that time there was a policy of not introducing any new badges. However, after renewed appeals the badge was eventually approved by Order of the Commander-in-Chief and Minister of Defence No.4, Section 40, dated 21 October 1941. It was to be awarded after six months' service, or automatically to those decorated for valour irrespective of length of service.

The design for the badge depicted the muzzle of a rifle with fixed bayonet, in the shape of the figure '4', with the letters *BKS* on the barrel, over an eagle covered on the left by a sprig of thistle, the whole within an oval frame 55mm by 40mm. In reality the badge measured 50mm by 38mm, however, and the

letters *BKS* were omitted. In common with other Polish commemorative badges, that of the 4th Cadre Rifle Bde. was worn on the left breast pocket of the *SI*D jacket and Battledress blouse.

The badge was described as being made of white metal 'or iron'(!). However, due to wartime shortages only a small number of full-size badges were made, and those produced were very crude lead alloy castings. Needless to add, copies of this badge are being produced; and in this case it is the reproductions which are of a superior quality to the originals.

Mention must be made of a miniature version of this badge measuring 30mm by 20mm, made in silver and with two loops on the reverse for a split-pin fastening. The order for this version was placed with the Edinburgh firm of Hamilton and Inches, although it is understood that this work was sub-contracted to Kirkwood and Son. A total of 44 miniatures were produced, the first 18 being presented to officers of the brigade who had volunteered for service

with British colonial forces in West Africa.

OTHER INSIGNIA

In practice, Polish Airborne forces wore few other insignia. The 'Poland' shoulder title was carried on Service Dress, Battledress and greatcoat. Officers were to wear the titles embroidered in silver wire, but frequently made use of the Other Ranks' version embroidered in white thread.

On 24 September 1941 Col. Sosabowski requested the approval of Air Force blue shoulder straps together with a combined shoulder title 'Poland' above a parachute with up-swept wings, also in Air Force blue. Both these proposals were turned down by the Commander-in-Chief. On 22 January 1942 Sosabowski again proposed a special combined shoulder title and formation sign: a 70mm square patch consisting of the conventional 'Poland' title above a parachute, with the figure '1' at the bottom and thistles to either side, the design to be in white on khaki. This proposal, too, was rejected.

The archives of the Polish Institute and Sikorski Museum in London contain further designs for formation signs for the Parachute Brigade, none of which was approved. All consist of a parachute with the addition of various motifs such as oakleaves, swords, lightning-bolts, eagles, or wings.

Contrary to the belief of many collectors, the Parachute Brigade did not wear the Pegasus patch. However, officers attached to the Special Training Centre at Lochailort, Scotland were given permission by the Commander-in-Chief in January 1942 to wear the Centre's formation sign — in fact worn unofficially since the previous month.

The 1st Polish Parachute

Holland, October 1944: a group of officers and men, apparently mostly from the Bde. Medical Coy., on a Dutch airfield prior to the move to Ostende for shipping back to the UK. The central foreground man can be seen to wear Medical Corps collar patches, parachute qualification badge, and Battledress trousers with the special large left thigh pocket for airborne forces. Toggle-ropes seem to be generally carried.





The 1st Polish Independent Parachute Brigade was unusual in possessing three Colours, although only one fell within the strict Polish definition of the term. The 'true' Colour was unusual in that it was sewn by Polish women in occupied Warsaw; consecrated on 3 November 1942, smuggled in fragments to the United Kingdom; and presented to the brigade by the President of the Polish Republic, Władysław Raczkiewicz, at Cupar on 15 June 1944 — the occasion of this photograph, in which the Colour is seen at the left. On the right is the brigade's first Colour, presented by the British 1st Airborne Div. on 1 January 1943 as a symbol of brotherhood in arms. In the centre is a small Colour, topped by a very large bronze diving eagle finial; this second flag was presented at Leven on 23 September 1943 by the ladies of Fife. The Colour from Warsaw may be seen at the Sikorski Museum, London, while the other two are on loan to the Airborne Forces Museum at Browning Barracks, Aldershot.

Brigade's history ('*Polscy Spadochroniarze*') mentions that Polish instructors at Ringway wore the British specialist insignia of a parachute within a wreath on the left sleeve. Presumably this refers to the Royal Air Force PJI insignia.

In certain photographs Polish personnel may be seen wearing both Polish and British parachute wings. It is presumed that the British wings were gained either at parachute courses prior to the formation of the Polish centre, or at later special courses.

Miscellaneous Badges & Insignia

Among the items illustrated here in colour is a diving eagle badge whose significance is not known. This motif also appeared on the brigade's letter paper and on certain certificates issued by the brigade. Some collectors have speculated that this was perhaps the first design of the parachute qualification

badge, as the eagle has such a large beak and claws (the reader is reminded that the first pattern combat badge was only to have differed from the ordinary badge in having gilded claws and beak, and on the approved pattern these areas are so small as to be insignificant, even if gilded). Nevertheless, the illustration included in the approving order shows the normal qualification badge, thus disproving this hypothesis; and the badge illustrated here continues to defy identification.

We also illustrate in colour the three current lapel badges of the Polish Airborne Forces Association:

- 1) Silver with gold wreath and lettering — for exceptional services to the Association.
- 2) Silver with gold lettering — for special services to the Association.
- 3) All silver — for all members and honorary members of the Association.

The very many miniature

versions of the parachute qualification badge have not been included.

INDEPENDENT GRENADIER COMPANY

Apart from the 1st Polish Independent Parachute Brigade, there also existed one further Polish parachute unit: the Independent Grenadier Company.

The company was formed on 4 August 1943, on the orders of the Commander-in-Chief, as an 'elite' (sic) parachute unit reserved for special duties. It was formed from among young, healthy volunteers, having a knowledge of the French language, who had undergone special training. The company came under the direct orders of the C-in-C Staff, and the unit's commanding officer had the powers of a battalion commander.

It was the intention to use the unit in the 'Bardsea Plan', during the Allied invasion of Europe, when the company

would link up with forces of the French-based *Polska Organizacja Wojskowa* ('Polish Military Organisation' — a Polish resistance group). The company was to be dropped near Lille, to take part in sabotage operations together with the local POW battalion. Future plans envisaged expanding the company to regimental strength.

Operations were to have been carried out by 15 patrols each consisting of the patrol commander, deputy commander, mine specialist, sniper and radio operator. The rest of the unit would have been dropped into France previously to train the POW.

The company was to have gone into action at the end of August 1944; but as the result of the early liberation of Lille the drop was cancelled at the last moment. The Polish Authorities then demanded that the company be dropped into Warsaw in order to aid the Uprising which had been raging since 1 August. This course of action was rejected by the Allies on the grounds of 'technical difficulties'. It is understood that the company was then to have been used in Germany, but no evidence to support this has yet been found. In September 1944 many members of the company transferred to the 1st Polish Independent Parachute Bde., and the company was officially disbanded on 1 September 1945.

The strength of the company varied; originally of 22 officers and 119 Other Ranks, it was increased to 39 officers and 143 ORs in February 1944, and finally to 58 and 262 in February 1945. Consecutive company commanders were: Maj. Edmund Galiant; Maj. Stefan Szymanski; Maj. Karol Kowalski; and Lt. Zbigniew Piersciankowski (acting). The company was stationed at Warnham Court and Rudgwick, both located near Horsham in Sussex.

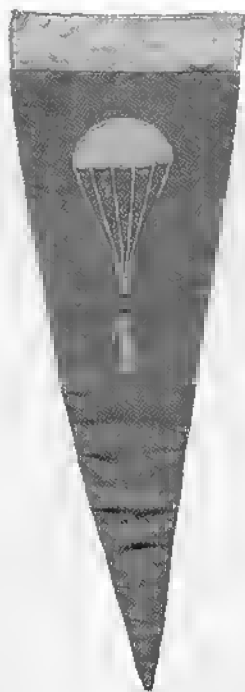
Insignia

Order of the Commander-in-Chief and Minister of Defence No.4, Section 49,

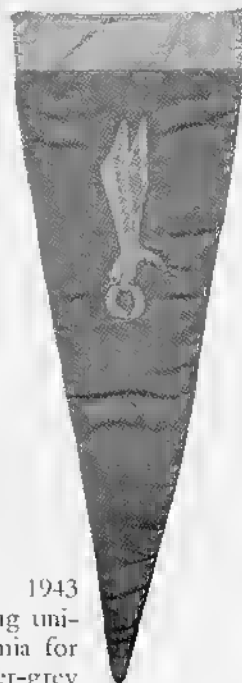


Early photograph of the brigade's band, in Bartedress and 1940 pattern gabardine jump-jackets. The drum covers appear to be dark blue with a white eagle on a red or

crimson shield. Note drum major's mace topped with a version of the Army eagle; and 'jingling Johnnie'.



Pennant of the 1st Parachute Rifle Bn.; these pennants appear to have been carried on the rifle bayonet. Of grey cloth, it has a broad yellow 'mast' edge, and white appliqué motifs — a parachute and battalion number on one side, a white 'combat' parachute eagle on the other.



dated 4 October 1943 approved the following uniform items and insignia for the company: poster-grey berets; poster-grey collar patches edged cherry red at the top, with silver parachute badge; and the formation sign of the 2nd Cadre Armoured Grenadier Division. (It is understood that the formation sign was not, in fact, worn.) Secret Order

Below:

Later photograph of the band, now in Denison smocks. A new drum major's mace is evident, topped with a parachute and diving eagle; this was to remain in use until the brigade was disbanded in 1947.



Right:

Bersenbruck, Germany, October 1946: a private of the brigade with the pennant of his unit — possibly one of the artillery batteries — attached to the bayonet of his Lee Enfield No. 5 'jungle carbine', with which the brigade was equipped during service with BAOR.

of the C-in-C and Minister of Defence No.4, Section 44, dated 29 September 1944 approved the wearing of the Special Forces wings by the

company as well as by the Operations Staff. The colour of the beret and patches was eventually changed to a darker grey, as in the case of the Parachute Brigade. Qualification insignia were as for the Parachute Brigade.

Uniforms and equipment Service Dress and Bandedress were as for the remainder of the Polish Forces; however, combat uniform often consisted of a mixture of British and United States items.

One unusual item was the protective jump helmet used by the company. This was the protective helmet which usually formed an integral part of the Special Operations Executive Camouflage Operational Suit. From photographic evidence it seems that the helmets were detached from the suits and worn with the Denison

smock. It would seem possible that, had the company been dropped into enemy-occupied territory, it would have worn the complete SOE Suit.

Each member of the company was armed with an M1911A1 automatic pistol, as well as an M42 Marlin sub-machine gun; the FS fighting knife was also carried. Other equipment, such as PIATs, 'bazookas', machine guns, ammunition and explosives were rigged for dropping in special bags rather than the conventional rigid containers. **[M]**

Sources:

Miscellaneous orders of the Commander-in-Chief and Minister of Defence; 4th Cadre Rifle Bde. and 1st Polish Independent Parachute Bde. orders; diaries; commemorative books and albums — all held by the archives of the Polish Institute and Sikorski Museum, 20 Princes Gate, London SW7.

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Addendum:

In Part 1, 'MI' No.12, p.26, the photograph of Gen. Browning's visit to the Bde. was taken at Leven on 23 August 1943; officers shown are (left to right) Col. Sosabowski, Maj. Ryszard Malaszkiewicz, Col. Roman Saloni, and Gen. Browning.

Men of the Independent Grenadier Coy. prior to a training jump. All wear the special protective helmet which normally formed part of the SOE Camouflage Operational Suit; Denison smocks; and more or less standard British 1937 webbing. All seem to carry the holstered Colt M1911A1 pistol, and close to it the FS fighting knife; all seem to have binoculars; other weapons and equipment were carried in the leg-bags.

Many differing accounts have been published as to the particular model of FS knife carried by the Polish paratroopers. A variety of different models were undoubtedly distributed; but for what it is worth, an example held by the Sikorski Museum, and several others retained by veterans of the brigade, seem to indicate that the main type had the bronze chequered grip and the 'B2' and broad arrow mark on the cross-hilt.



COHORTES EQUITATAE from Augustus to Hadrian

PAUL HOLDER

Painting by PETER CONNOLLY

In the first two vigorous centuries of the Roman Imperial era the greater part of Europe, the Mediterranean littoral and much of the Middle East was garrisoned by a regular legionary army which was never more than approximately the same size as the British Army of the 1980s, supported by a varying force of auxiliary cohorts totalling roughly the same strength again. By the early 2nd century AD nearly half of this important auxiliary army was made up of an intriguing type of unit — the part-mounted cohorts, or *cohortes equitatae*.

The *auxilia* first raised by the Emperor Augustus (reigned 27 BC to AD 14) to back up his legions comprised three types of unit. The infantry *cohortes* were based on the legionary model: that is, each of six 'centuries' each roughly 80 strong, totalling about 480 men at full strength. The auxiliary cavalry unit was the *ala* (literally, 'wing'), divided into 16 troops or *turmae* of 32 riders each, totalling 512. The composite *cohortes equitatae* included both six centuries of infantry, and a mounted component of 120 troopers. By the reign of Hadrian (AD 117-138) at least 130 of the 270 auxiliary cohorts attested are known to have been of this part-mounted type.

From the reign of Vespasian (AD 69-79) there were, in addition, *cohortes milliariae equitatae*: these consisted of ten centuries of infantry and a mounted component of 240 men divided into eight *turmae*. These important units were either new creations, or existing cohorts increased in size. At least 22 such regiments are known, out of a total of 32 'milliary cohorts' attested, in the reign of Hadrian.

Interpretation of the evidence for the infantry component of these part-mounted units presents no

problems. All the evidence points to the belief that they were the equals of the wholly-infantry *cohortes peditarum* in status, pay, equipment and training. It is the rôle of the mounted component that has proved open to various interpretations.

One common belief is that the men were mounted infantry, because their equipment and mounts were not as good as those of the cavalrymen in the *ala*, and they were paid less. However, proper attention to the ancient literary, epigraphic and sculptural sources shows this belief to be erroneous, and that the *equites cohortales* — 'cohort troopers' — were deployed as cavalry proper. It is the aim of this article to review this evidence anew.

RECRUITMENT AND SERVICE

As instituted by Augustus, the *auxilia* were organised into units named after the peoples, tribes or towns on the periphery of the Empire from which they originated. The personnel (who were obtained by some form of selective conscription) were, to begin with, ready-trained fighting men. However, once a frontier area became more settled the supply of such warrior recruits would dwindle. In addition, as the auxiliary regiments were

transferred to different parts of the Empire, eventually settling down as part of the garrison of a province, the original ethnic ties of the individual units were broken; by the early 2nd century localised recruiting in the area of service was normal. Different criteria were also adopted in the selection of recruits; and training, especially for cavalrymen, was essential.

Recruits were now normally volunteers aged between 18 and 23 (the youngest possible age was 14, the oldest 35). To become a trooper in an *ala* a prospective recruit had to be at least 5ft. 10in. (Roman), but normally 6ft. (Roman) — 1.8m, or 5ft. 11in. modern measure. He had to pass a stringent medical, and to possess, in the judgement of the recruiting officer, the right qualities for an *equus*. These qualifications, particularly in the matter of height, were not so strict for cavalry recruits to part-mounted units.

After four months' basic training the cavalryman was assigned to his unit. There he served out the term of 25

A scene from Trajan's Column, showing a Roman army on the march during the Dacian campaign of AD 101. In the foreground, cavalrymen march dismounted leading their horses — essential at regular intervals in order to husband their mounts and maintain their range and mobility under campaign conditions¹⁰. Note that the oval shields are slung from the two right-hand horns of the saddle, both saddle and shield apparently propped from the weather by a second saddle-cloth thrown over them. (From C. Cichorius, *Die Reliefs der Trajanssäule*)

years for which he had enlisted, to be finally discharged with an award of Roman citizenship for himself and his descendants (if he did not already possess it), amongst other privileges. Transfer from one unit to another was unlikely for a trooper; but promotion was possible. It was even possible for an infantryman to be promoted to *equus* in a part-mounted cohort after about ten years, with a hefty pay increase.

¹⁰ I am indebted to Dr. S.H. Bartle for his analysis of Roman skill-at-arms, and cavalry practice on campaign.



Tombstone of Balaternus, an infantryman of the cohorts VI Delmatarum; with cohorts VII Delmatarum and cohorts I Pannoniorum, this part-mounted unit saw four years' difficult campaigning in the Atlas mountains of North Africa during a major revolt against Roman rule in Mauretania in the mid-1st century AD. The tombstone is the only one identifying an infantryman among the group found at Cherchel in Algeria. As in a Rhineland group of infantry tombstones of similar period, Balaternus is shown in 'military' uniform, bare-headed and with his cloak worn over his tunic. Belt, groin-guard, sword and dagger are prominently depicted. He holds two spears in his left hand, and what may be a stick in his right, though the inscription does not indicate that he held rank. In translation it may be reconstructed as follows: 'Balaternus, son of Aulus, citizen of the *Malgurum*, soldier of cohorts VI Delmatarum, 28 years of age, eight years' service, lies here. May the earth rest lightly upon you.' (Musée de Cherchel)



Right:

Tombstone of Licus, the most complete of the Cherchel group, all of which show troopers riding down rebellious barbarians. They do not, however, follow rigidly conventional designs, but seem to attempt individual portraits of men performing different evolutions. There are minor differences in the short scabbard-like cuirasses depicted, and the lack of helms is also unusual. In this case Licus is carrying out the 'first point' against infantry, driving his lance home underarm, with a flexed right arm. The inscription translates as 'Licus, son of Aulus, soldier of cohorts VII Delmatarum, troop of Annus, 27 years of age, 11 years' service, lies here. His heir may this according to his will.' (Musée de Cherchel)

FIGHTING METHODS

The evidence for the cavalry training operated by the Roman army as revealed in the writings of Onasander (AD 47/58) and Arrian (AD 136), as well as by Hadrian's speech to the army of Africa in AD 128, shows that cavalrymen of *cohortes equitatae* were expected to perform complex manoeuvres, but not necessarily as 'stylishly' as men of the *alae*. This is brought out best by Hadrian's address to the troopers of cohorts VI *Commagenorum*:

'It is difficult for the cavalrymen in a cohort to make a good impression

even when seen in isolation, and more difficult for them not to disappoint when inspected after exercises carried out by men of an *ala*. The areas of the parade ground are different, the number of javelin-throwers is different, the right-wheels are in quick succession and the Cantabrian gallop in close order... The appearance and quality of the horses, and the training in and elegance of the weapons are in keeping with the level of pay. But you have avoided my displeasure by the ardour you displayed in carrying out your duties briskly. Moreover, you have thrown stones from slings and fought with missiles, and your jumping was everywhere prompt...'

The Cantabrian gallop was a speciality of *alae*, and is described by Arrian in his *Tactica*. In practising this manoeuvre, one group of men galloped in a circle, and as they did so hurled special short spears in sequence at the shields of the second group, who rode past in a line.

The evolution called *xanuma*, which men from another part-mounted cohort performed for Hadrian, is also described by Arrian. Here the riders galloped in a

straight line, armed with three or four spears, and had to throw two of them at a target before turning; the third was thrown at a different target while turning the horse to the right. The best cavalrymen could throw all four before turning, or the fourth while turning.

The standard missile weapon was the dual-purpose lance/javelin, which was about seven or eight feet long. Each trooper had three; their thrown range was 25m at most. Alternatives were light darts, about 20 being carried at a time; these could be hurled about 40 metres. Stones could be thrown by means of slings or, curiously, by hand; and there was obviously some use of bows and arrows.

Horse-archers used a short composite bow which probably had a range of about 50 metres. What could be achieved by a mounted archer is graphically revealed by the feat of Soranus, performed in the presence of Hadrian in the province of Lower Pannonia in AD 118. After swimming the Danube in full kit, he shot an arrow into the air, and broke it with a second before it hit the ground. Yet Soranus did not come from the East, nor was

he a trooper in a regiment of horse-archers: he was a member of cohorts III *Batavarum milliaria equitata*. Specialist archer units were few, indeed; some 20 part-mounted archer cohorts are definitely attested during Hadrian's reign. It therefore seems possible that sections of most *cohortes equitatae* were armed in different ways, in order to diversify their firepower.

Lance tactics

In addition to their missiles, the cavalry of part-mounted units had the ability to employ shock tactics just like their counterparts in the *alae*.

The need for stirrups was obviated by the design of the Roman saddle (discussed in more detail in Peter Connolly's companion article). The horns at the corners enabled the rider to keep his seat after pressing home a lance attack. That troopers of part-mounted units were capable of such tactics from an early date is shown by numerous sculpted tombstones; we reproduce here examples of members of cohorts VI and VII *Delmatarum* found at Cherchel in Algeria, which can be dated to the period AD 40-70.

Normally the rider would

sit well into his saddle, with his knees and thighs locked against his mount for control. But the tombstone of Dazas shows that it was possible to lean quite far out of the saddle to thrust at an enemy without fear of falling off. Scenes on Trajan's Column show that lance attacks could be made against cavalry, and some of the exercises for this technique are described by Arrian. Usually the lance was held with a slightly flexed and outstretched arm, and was thrust home. For engagements against enemy cavalry the lance was held in a couched position under the right armpit, the rider relying on the impetus of his horse to drive it home; the range of movement was restricted, but this firm grip enabled deadly accuracy, and the parrying of the enemy's lance.

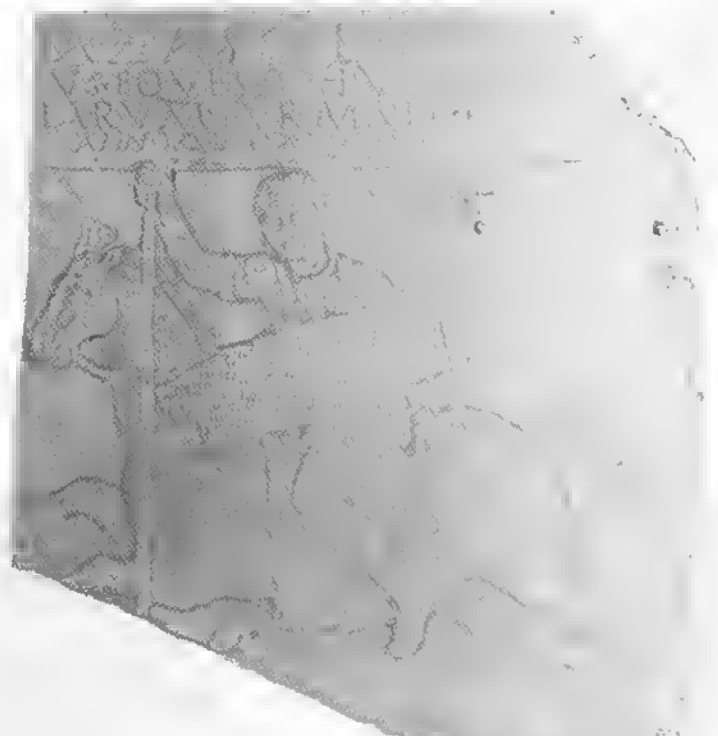
THE MOUNTS

The ability of Roman cavalry depended largely on their mounts, which were specially selected and trained.

Before being accepted for training each horse — at least four years old — went through a complete veterinary examination and 'aptitude test'. Special attention was paid to its spirit, stamina and agility. The horses selected were mares or geldings, supplied either from Imperial stud farms or from civilian sources.

Once accepted, they were trained at depots such as that discovered at the Lint near Coventry, where excavators found a circular, sunken arena apparently used for breaking horses. After training a horse would have been assigned to a particular cavalryman in a unit; its rider would be subject to a pay deduction in the case of the careless loss of his mount.

The Romans used a variety of breeds, with horses from Libya and Cappadocia prominent. They also introduced the Arab to the West, and bred it with the smaller Celtic horses to produce top-quality mounts. Examination of horse remains from Roman sites confirms



the variety of breeds, and reveals a variation in height between 13 and 15.2 hands. Of course, not all these horses were necessarily cavalry mounts, as large numbers of transport animals would also have been needed. Of nine horses found at Newstead in Scotland the

This tombstone, to Dazas, is unusual in showing the complete left side. He is carrying out a lance attack on a recumbent enemy on his shield side, leaning forward and left with his shield in a forward guard and thrusting down overarm with his lance held in a thumb-to-rear grip. Many tombstones show the lance held near the butt end. We need not take this literally — a grip so far behind the point of balance is obviously impossible — but a grip some way to the rear of the mid-point does seem to be indicated. The hexagonal or 'clipped oval' shield is interesting; the flecked effect is presumably dipping to provide a 'key' for plaster which was originally applied all over the sculpture, and painted. The inscription may be reconstructed as: 'Dazas, son of Scenus, a Maeztian, trooper of cohorts VI Delmatarum, troop of Licco, 27 years of age, 10 years' service.' (Musée de Cherchel)



Left:

This Trajanic relief, now part of the Arch of Constantine, shows a cavalryman — from his shield and plumes, a member of an élite Roman unit — holding his lance in the thumb-to-rear grip at the point of balance, and thrusting it overarm into his enemy's neck. The apparently hexagonal shield covers his left flank from shoulder to knee: its size may be exaggerated here. Even though thrusting, he seems to have his mount well under control and his seat is firm. (From L'Orange & Von Gerken, Der spätantike Bildschmuck des Konstantinobogens)

Auxiliary cavalry in action against mailed Roxolani riders, AD 101. Pursuing their mounted opponents, these troopers demonstrate some of the evolutions which Roman cavalry were trained to perform. Note that the relief originally included their lancers, which are now lost, but the positions of their right arms still tell us a good deal. The galloping rider at bottom left has his lance at the 'ready', and holds his oval shield forward to protect himself and his mount's neck. At top right a rider appears to be charging, his shield in the forward guard to ward off missiles and his lance held down at the 'engage' with arm slightly flexed; presumably he does not touch his lance since he is engaging a fleeing enemy from the rear, rather than facing a head-on charge. Left centre is a trooper preparing to throw his shield like a javelin, again with his shield in the forward guard position. (From C. Cichorius, *Die Reliefs der Trajanssäule*)

smallest were 13-hand ponies, and presumably used for baggage transport. The presumed cavalry mounts were about 14 hands or a little taller. This is confirmed by the find of a complete horse skeleton at the cavalry fort at Dormagen in Lower Germany; this measured 14.3 hands.

The form or build of a horse was the criterion for assignment to either a cavalry *ala* or a *cohors equitata*. The former were of better quality and overall appearance. While Roman cavalry horses may have been smaller than their modern counterparts, they evidently had superior stamina. The norm for a day's march by cavalrymen of part-mounted cohorts was

probably about 60 miles, and the *alae* could probably march another ten.

EMPLOYMENT

Once it is recognised that Roman cavalry were highly mobile and effective as either missile or shock troops, their rôle can be better appreciated. The *alae* were employed strategically as mobile troops; and the troopers of the part-mounted cohorts performed the contact duties of internal security and the maintenance of communications.

The range of duties is indicated by the *pridivium* or strength report of *cohors I Hispanorum veterana equitata* which survives from AD 105. Although the categories and

totals of men employed in the various tasks listed are largely lost, enough remains to reveal troopers sent to get horses; in garrison; on an expedition; scouting; and escorting a grain convoy, as well as one trooper killed by bandits, and a number detached for service among the *equites singulares* (mounted guards) of the governor of Lower Moesia.

This range of duties is amplified by literary sources. A letter of the Younger Pliny when governor of Bithynia records two *equites cohortales* escorting infantrymen collecting corn. Josephus records cohort troopers acting as riot police on a number of occasions, the most significant being the employment



Peter Connolly's reconstruction shows two horsemen of a *cohors equitata*. One prepares to stab downwards, holding his lance with a thumb-to-rear vertical grip, the other to thrust forwards with a thumb-forward grip. The equipment of men and horses is of the simplest kind. Scale armour was the easiest to make, and various slightly differing scale cuirasses — with and without shoulder reinforcements, and leather pteruges in one or two rows at hips and/or shoulders — are indicated on the cavalryman's grave stelae of the Chertel group; many bronze scales have been found on various Roman sites. The long *spatha* sword was the characteristic cavalryman's sidearm. We have shown helmets corresponding in shape to Auxiliary Cavalry E and F under the late

H.R. Robinson's classification, in a cheap bronze version. This form has been dated to the Antonine period, rather later than our subject, by a fragmentary find from Newstead, Scotland, but there is, of course, no knowing how early this helmet shape started to be seen; and the surcoat of e.g. the Neronian troopers *Decimus* and *Rufus* *Sita* of cohorts IV and VI *Thracum* show very deep helmets with very large cheek-guards, arguably identifiable with this type.



PETER
CONNOLLY

by Florus of two part-mounted cohorts in Jerusalem in AD 66, when the troopers used their double-weight practice weapons as batons to disperse demonstrators. The Apostle Paul, after his arrest in Jerusalem, was escorted to Caesarea by 70 riders from a part-mounted cohort to save him from being lynched. *Equites cohortales* were used extensively as messengers.

For the patrolling of mountain areas they also provided the most suitable force, since in such terrain units of more than about 100 riders could not act cohesively, and were liable to run into difficulties. When it came to fighting major campaigns the troopers of part-mounted cohorts fought alongside the cavalry *alae*. This is demonstrated to good effect by Arrian in his *Acies contra Alanos*. In the line of march the *equites* of two *alae* and four *cohortes equitatae* were brigaded together, and the troopers of *ala II Gallorum* and *cohors I Italica milliaria equitata* acted as flank guards for the legionaries. In the line of battle the cavalry was divided solely according to the types of weapon carried.

Wartime cavalry vexillations could be raised entirely from *equites cohortales*, and could function as independent units. The diploma of AD 129 from Dacia Inferior records a *vexillatio equitum Illyricorum*, evidently raised from the troopers of the

cohorts in Dalmatia and later given a permanent existence.

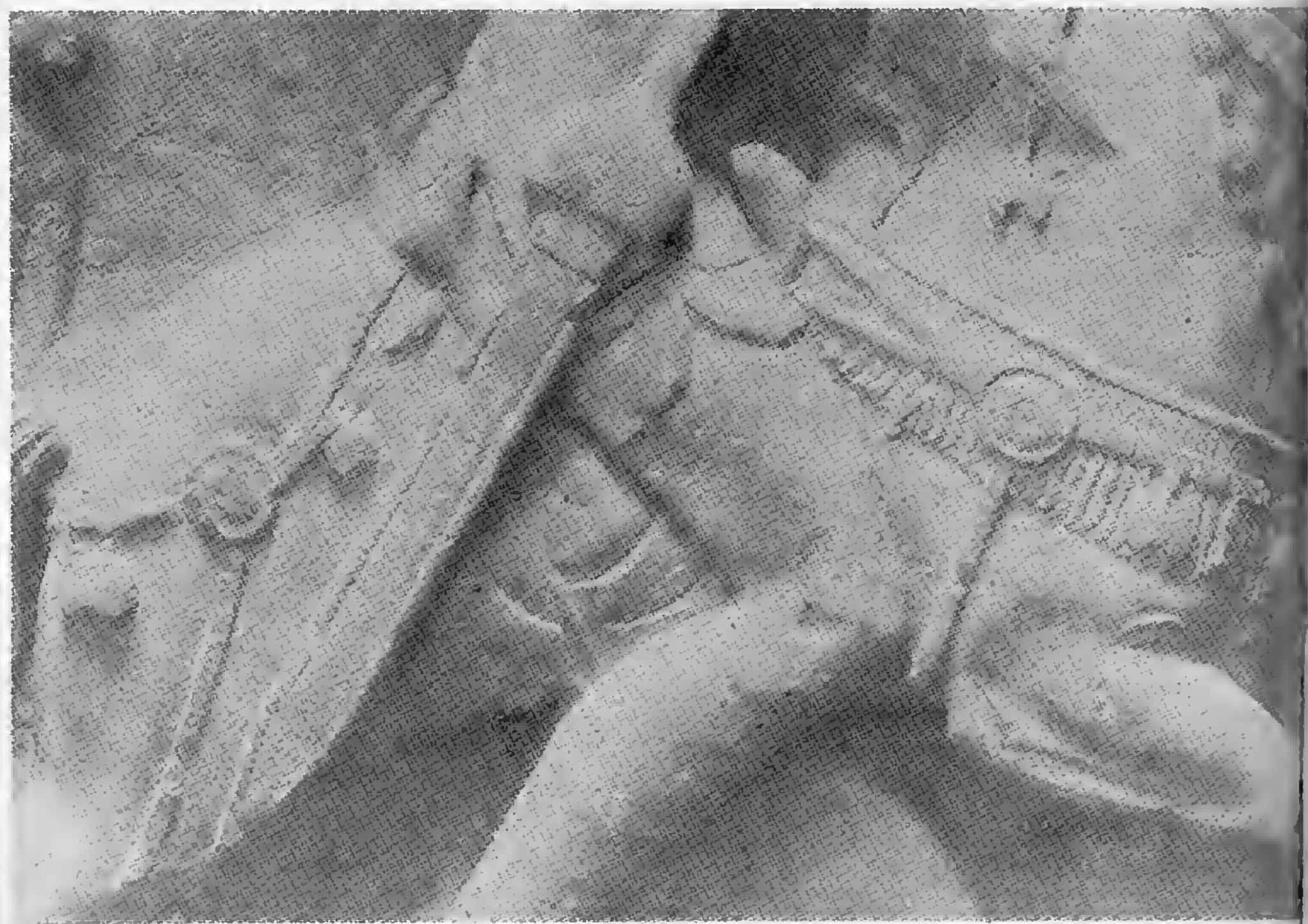
The poorer quality of horses and equipment, coupled with their lower rate of pay, meant that the mounted contingents of the part-mounted cohorts were generally employed as second-line cavalry. However, the Roman high command recognised the potential of such composite units; and as the 2nd century progressed greater emphasis was placed on the large *cohortes milliariae equitatae*. By the death of Marcus Aurelius in AD 180 there were at least 34 such regiments out of 50 milliary cohorts attested. The reason is not far to seek: the cavalry component was the equivalent of half an *ala*. This force was large enough to operate independently, or could be brigaded with the troopers from a second unit to form the equivalent of an *ala*.

MI

Bibliographical note

The most complete study of the Roman cavalry is an unpublished Ph.D. thesis by Dr. S.H. Bartle, 'A study of the Roman cavalry arm' (Newcastle, 1962). Full references to the sources referred to in this article can be found in R.W. Davies, 'Cohortes Equitatae', *Historia*, Bd.20 (1971), pp.751-763; and his 'Training grounds of the Roman cavalry', *Archaeological Journal*, Vol.125 (1969), pp.73-100. The publication of a collection of his papers, *Service in the Roman army*, ed. D. Breeze & V. Maxfield (Edinburgh UP) is awaited at the time of writing. The interpretations and conclusions reached in this article are, however, entirely the responsibility of the author.

Experiments with the Roman Saddle



PETER CONNOLLY

In 1984, while collecting material for a book on the Roman cavalry, my attention became concentrated on the saddle, because it seemed to hold the answer to many of the questions that had arisen during my research. The consensus of opinion was that there was no true saddle at this time and that, without stirrups, the Roman cavalryman could do little more than skirmish. Shock tactics were impossible.

My own researches did not support this view at all. The Roman cavalry had units of *contarii*, armed with very long spears; and several long cavalry swords — *spathae* — have been found, one from Rottweil in Germany being over a metre long and weighing about 1.5kg. These are not skirmishing weapons, and could only have been used by riders who were securely seated on their mounts. Many Roman cavalry tombstones show saddles with four 'horns' fitting closely to the thighs of the

rider. These quite clearly held him on the horse. There could be little doubt that these saddles were rigid, since there are sculptures showing shields — which weighed 7-8kg — hanging from the saddle horns. Convinced that the Romans used a saddle with a rigid tree, I decided to build one and test it.

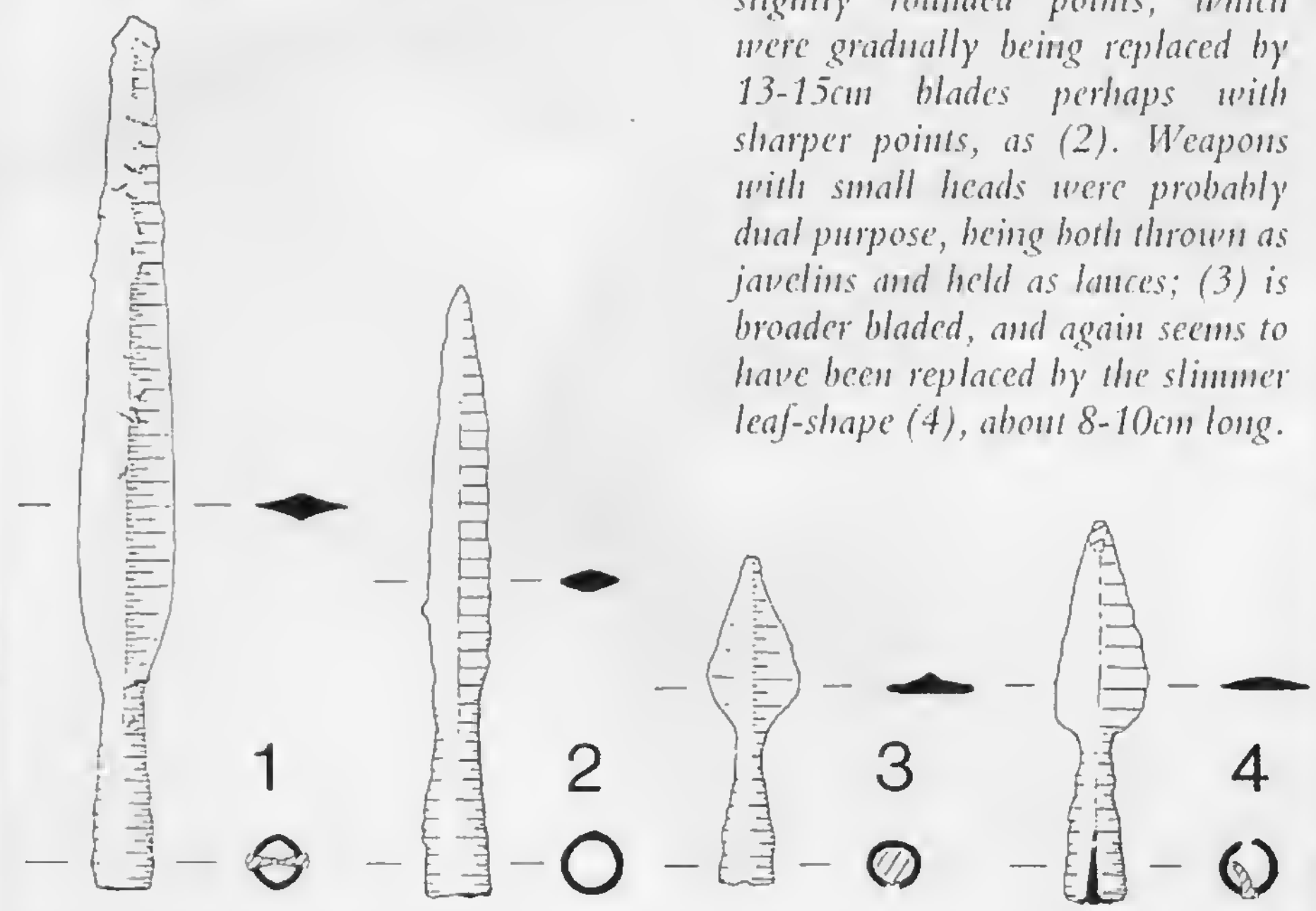
The archaeological evidence

A large number of pieces of leather saddle covering have been found, particularly at Valkenburg and Vechten in the Netherlands. These pieces are fragmentary, come from different saddles, and vary considerably in size and shape. There are also a number of bronze plates, which must have fitted over the saddle horns. A pair of L-shaped plates from Rottweil, Germany (see colour plates, 6) clearly had to fit across the back of the saddle, thus giving its exact dimensions. These became the starting-point for the reconstruction.

Size and shape

As it is essential that any rigid saddle should be made to fit a particular build of horse, I selected a 14-hand pony (circa 1.43m high at the withers) — the average size of the horse skeletons found

A selection of lance and javelin heads found at Hod Hill in Dorset, and thus dating from about AD 50.



(1) and (2) are slim, leaf-shaped heads; (1) belongs to a group with blades 17-25cm long, perhaps with slightly rounded points, which were gradually being replaced by 13-15cm blades perhaps with sharper points, as (2). Weapons with small heads were probably dual purpose, being both thrown as javelins and held as lances; (3) is broader bladed, and again seems to have been replaced by the slimmer leaf-shape (4), about 8-10cm long.

Above:

Detail from the tombstone of Titus Flavius Bassus at Cologne, Germany. Note the small saddle with 'thigh-hugging' horns. It is held in place by a breastplate and breech strap, each with a double attachment to the saddle. The girth strap is hidden by the rider's leg.

in the Roman cavalry fort at Krefeld-Gellep, Germany — and constructed a saddle tree to fit it. Not having the slightest idea of the form or size of the tree, I made a solid seat out of laminated strips of wood, which fitted the horse from the withers to the centre of the back: any saddle has to conform to this basic shape.

The horns

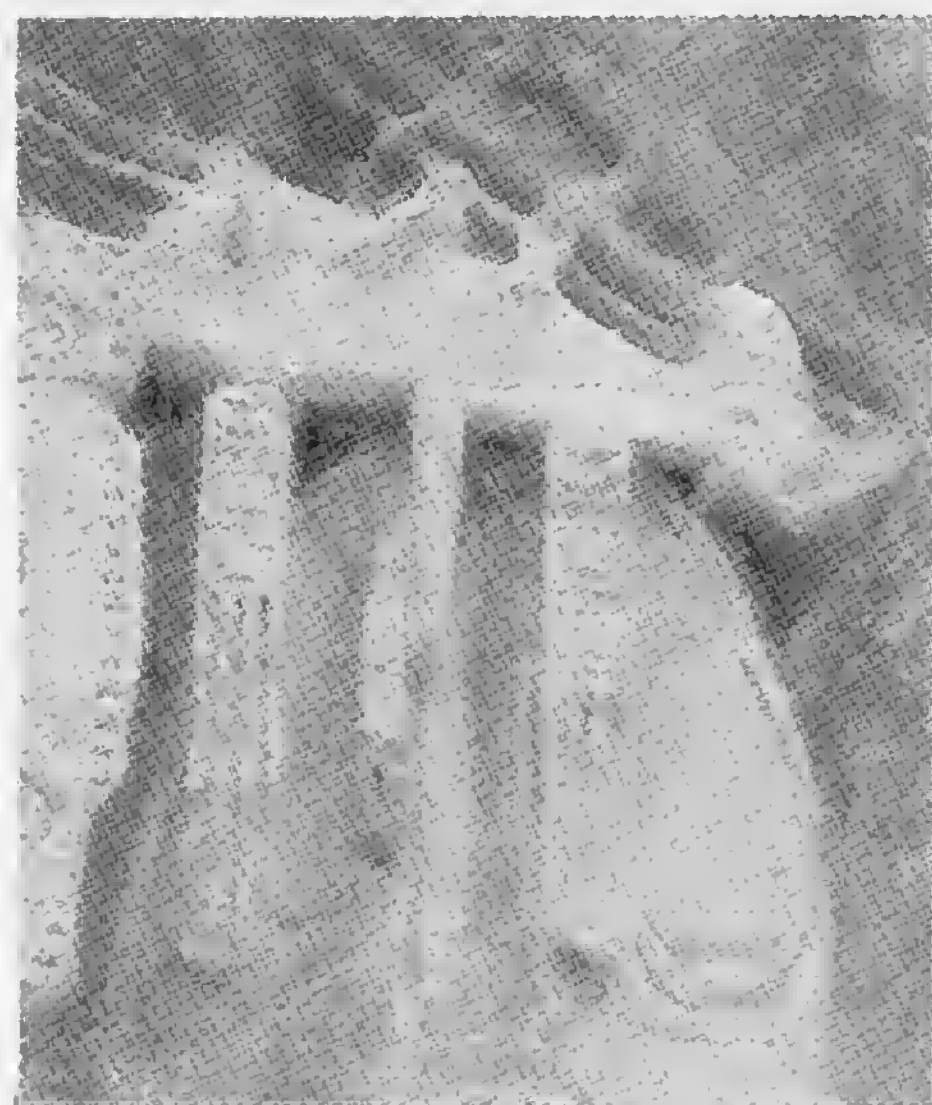
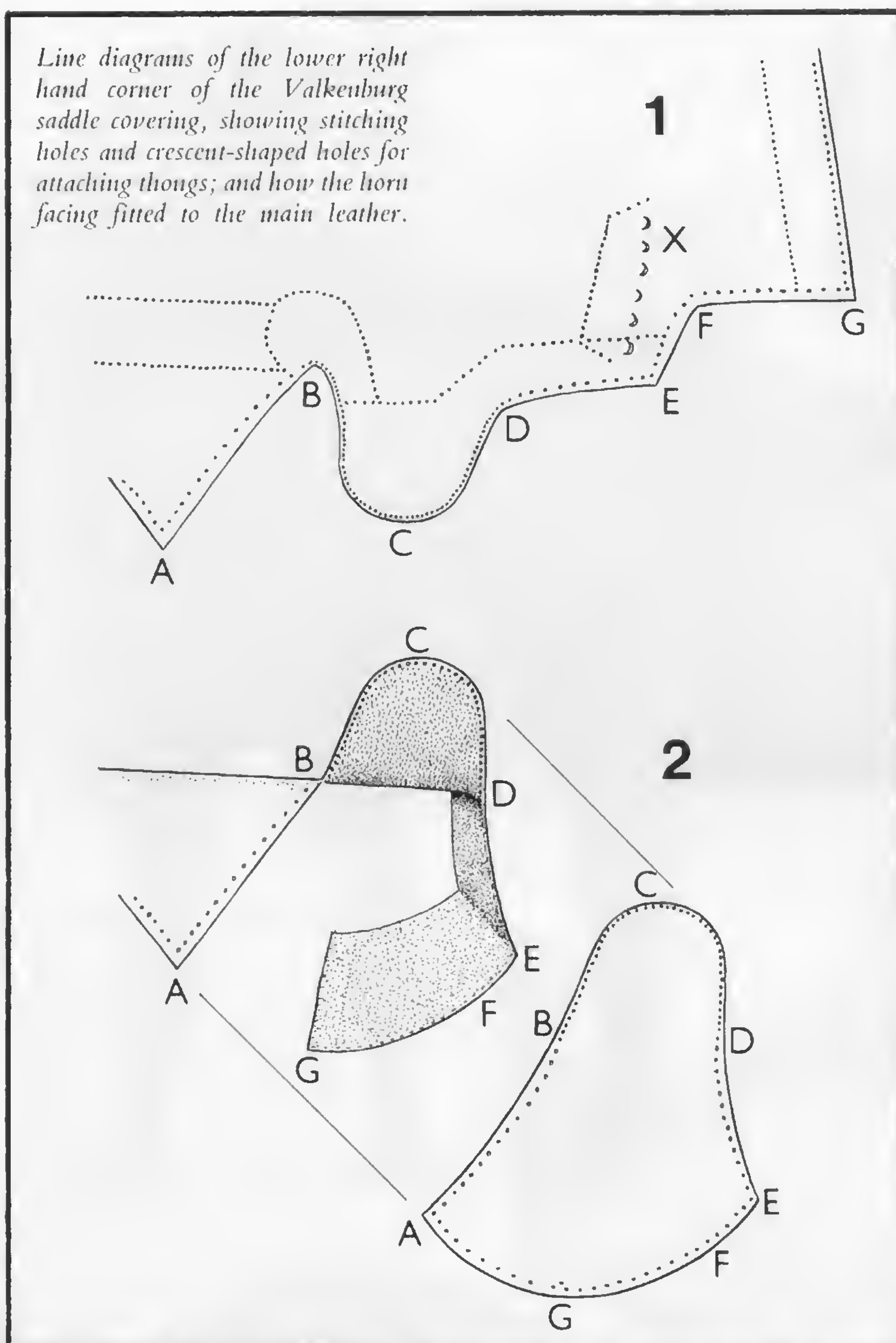
One of the pieces of leather from Valkenburg covered the seat and the inner faces of the horns of a Roman saddle (see colour plates, 5). Although the horns on this are too small to fit the Rottweil plates, the width of the back of the saddle is almost exactly the same. It was therefore possible to use it to work out the position of the front horns. Any saddle has to fit over the withers of the horse, and must therefore rise to a peak at the pommel forming an angle of about 60°. Assuming that the horns stuck out at right angles to the tree, they would have projected sideways at an angle of about 30° above the horizontal. This is the most straightforward and obvious reconstruction. To put the horns at any other angle would have required an arbitrary interpretation of the evidence. As will be seen, this proved to be of paramount importance in the understanding of the horns.

Several roughly triangular pieces of leather have been found, which were obviously used to cover the outer faces of the horns. They were stitched to the horn shapes (B-C-D in diagram 1), forming pockets into which the horns fitted.

The size of the tree

At this point work came to a halt: for although there were stitching holes along the edges of all the pieces of leather, there seemed to be no way of working out what they were sewn to. The leather hung down quite a long way at the sides, and appeared to give no clue to the width of the tree. Without more pieces there

Line diagrams of the lower right hand corner of the Valkenburg saddle covering, showing stitching holes and crescent-shaped holes for attaching thongs; and how the horn facing fitted to the main leather.



Another saddle from the Arch of Orange, showing decorative plaques fitted to the thongs.



seemed to be no way forward.

Then, as I was coming down to breakfast one morning, it suddenly struck me. What would happen if I made an outer horn facing — one of the triangular pieces — of the requisite size to stitch (see diagram 2) A-B-C down one side of it, C-D-E down the other, and E-F-G across the bottom? I bolted my breakfast, and rushed into the workroom. Two hours later I had a strange sort of bag with four pockets in it — but I now knew how to find out the size of the saddle tree: all I had to do was make it to fit the bag.

It required an enormous amount of trial and error to make the tree the right shape to fit the leather, as I had to keep stitching and unstitching it; but, after tearing the first cover and restitching the second so many times that the edges disintegrated, the wood and leather finally fitted. The result was reminiscent of the losenge-shaped saddles shown on many of the 1st century tombstones, such as those of Gaius Romanus and Titus Flavius Bassus reproduced here.

The stitching, and 'crescents'

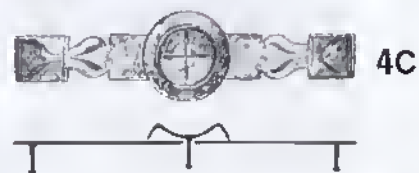
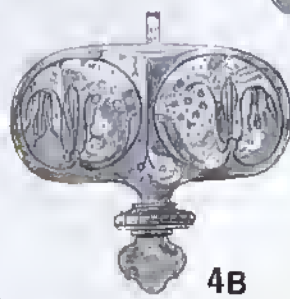
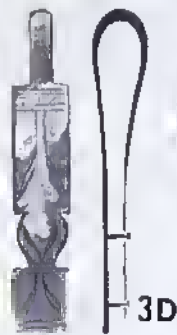
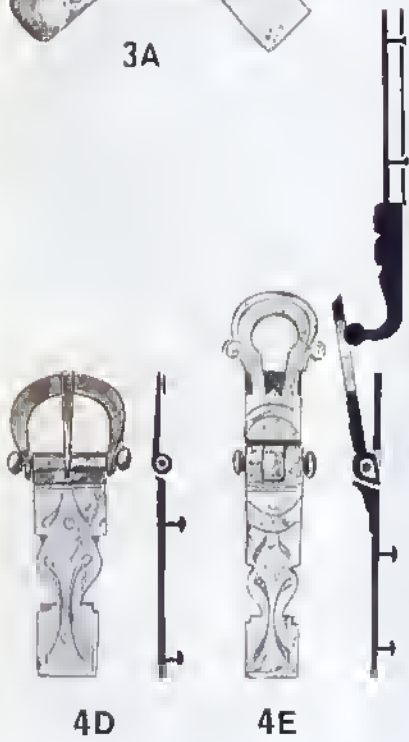
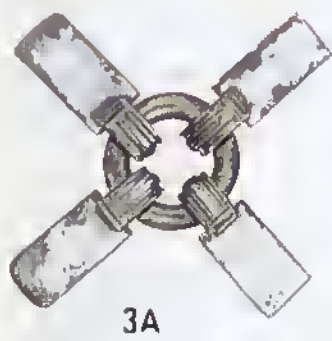
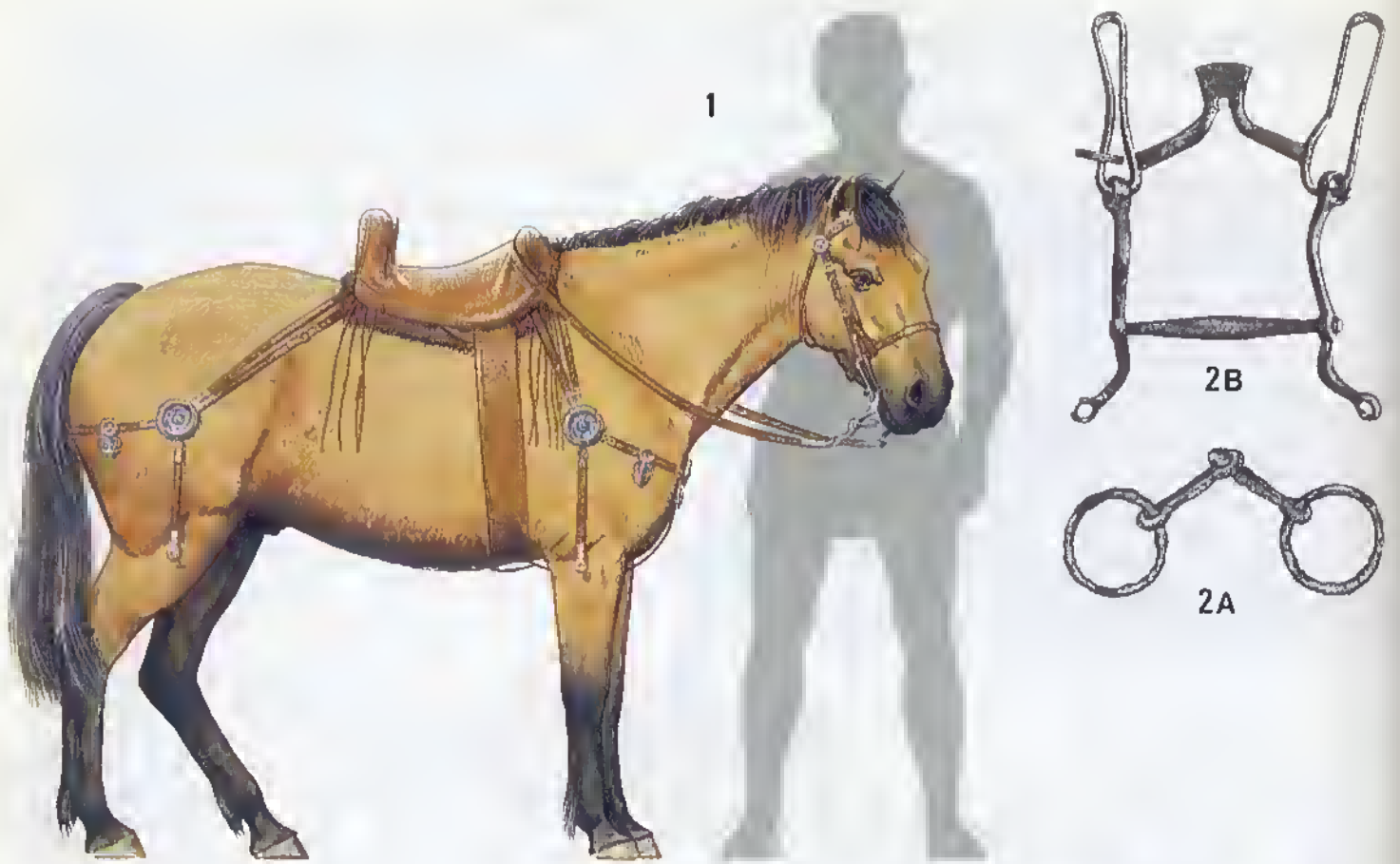
For some time I had been puzzled by the stitching — why were some of the stitching holes close-set, and others wider spaced? I now knew the answer: the neat stitching, e.g. around the horns, could be done before the leather was fitted to the tree, while it could still be

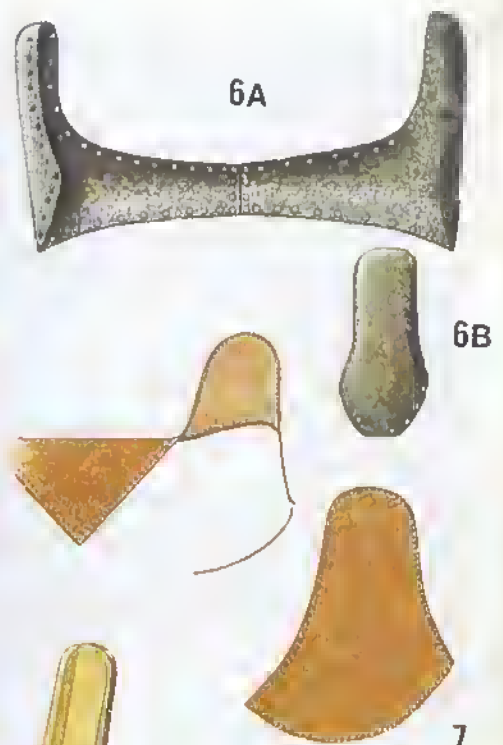
Above centre:

Detail from the tombstone of Gaius Romanus at Mainz, Germany. The saddle is very similar to that of Titus Flavius Bassus; the girth strap is visible here. The breastplate has a double attachment, the breech strap only one. The split at the thigh of the mail shirt is to allow the rider to sit astride the horse.

Left:

Relief from the Arch of Orange in southern France, showing a saddle (from above, the horns sticking out towards the viewer) with thongs, and a girth strap complete with a single large buckle.





5

8

6B

7

Left:

(1) Roman cavalry horse with four-horn saddle held in position by girth strap, breastplate and loach strap. Roman harness were only the size of large ponies; a man six Roman feet tall (1.8m) is shown for comparison.

(2A) Celtic snaffle bit, as used by Roman cavalry.

(2B) Complex Italian arch bit, as used by Roman cavalry. The mouthpiece has a flat ring that cuts into the roof of the horse's mouth when the reins are jerked. The cross bar fits under the chin. The cheek pieces of the bridle fit in the long metal loops, and the reins are attached to the rings at the bottom.

(3A) Simple harness junction ring.

(3B) Elaborately decorated harness junction disc. (3C) Rear of 3B

(3D) Strap attachment loop.

(3E), (3F) Front and rear of small harness disc and pendant.

(4A) Rear of small harness disc showing the imprint of the 20mm-wide leather strap with stitching along the edges.

(4B) Harness pendant.

(4C) Harness decoration

(4D) Buckle.

(4E), (4F) Two halves of a harness joint, face and side views.

This page:

(5) Reconstructed goatkin saddle covering, from Valkenburg, Netherlands.

(6A) A pair of bronze horn plates from the back of a Roman saddle, from Rottweil, Germany.

(6B) One of the front horn plates from the same saddle.

(7) Goatkin horn faring from Valkenburg, but not from the same saddle as 5.

(8) The saddle tree with the bronze horn plates in place.

(9) Rear view of the saddle, with the leather covering cut away to show the bronze horn plate and padding. The thick padding underneath on either side is to keep the centre of the saddle well clear of the horse's spine.

(10) Three-quarter front view of the reconstructed saddle with thongs, girth strap and breastplate attachments fitted.

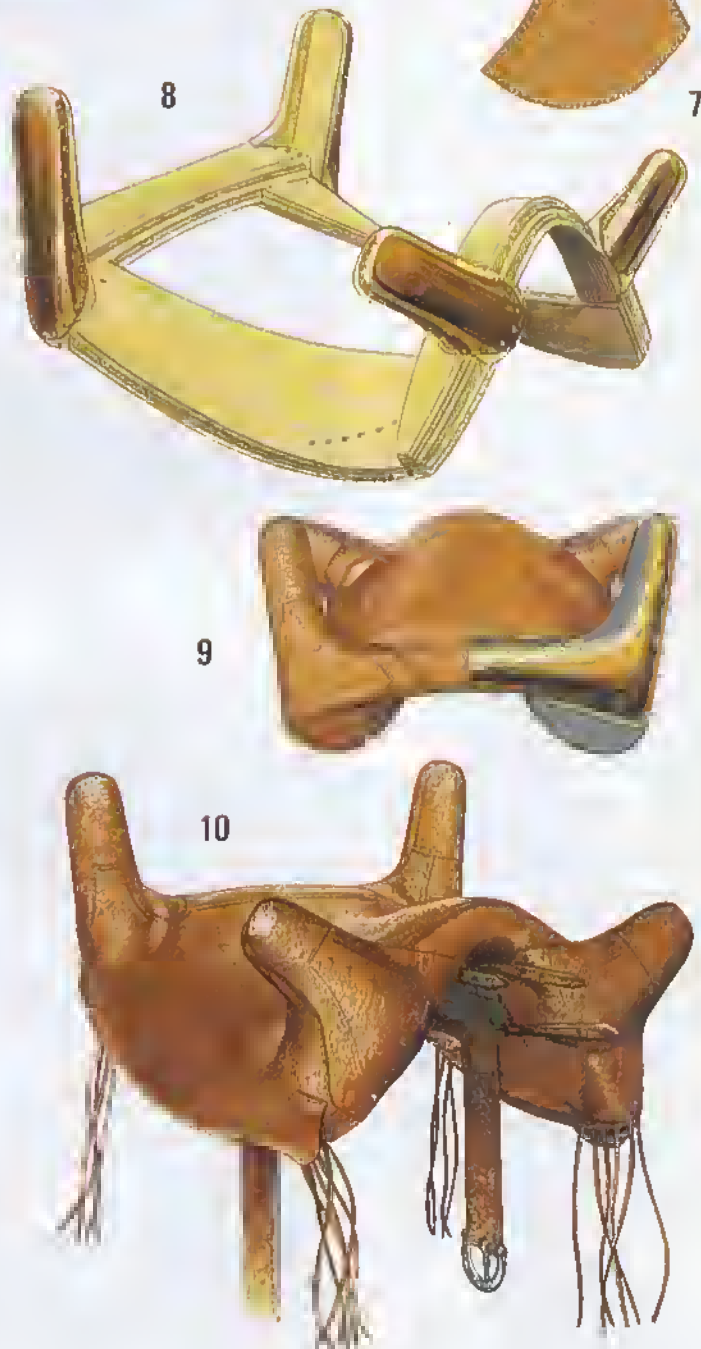
worked on from both sides. The coarser work had to be done after the leather was fitted, as it was mainly underneath the saddle.

The crescent-shaped holes (see diagram 1, X) coincided with the lower edge of the tree and, in retrospect, confirm the losenge shape of the saddle. These holes are clearly for attaching cords or thongs to the edge of the tree. They can be seen on many Roman sculptures, and had a dual purpose: to tie stowed equipment to the

pommel and cantle of the saddle when on campaign, and to suspend decorations when on parade (see accompanying photographs).

The bronze horn plates

Although the bronze horn plates had proved very useful when making the reconstruction, their exact function was far from obvious. It is even uncertain whether they fitted inside or outside the leather saddle covering. The examples from Newstead have names scratched on them,



which suggests that they may have been on the outside; but they also have traces of leather on the outside, which suggest quite the opposite.

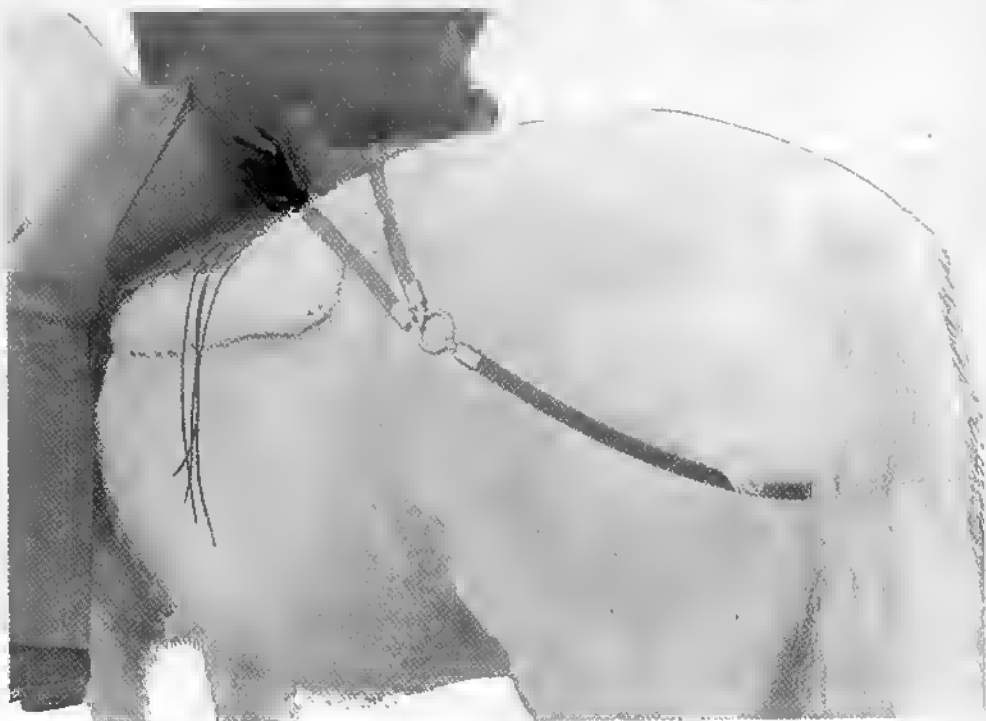
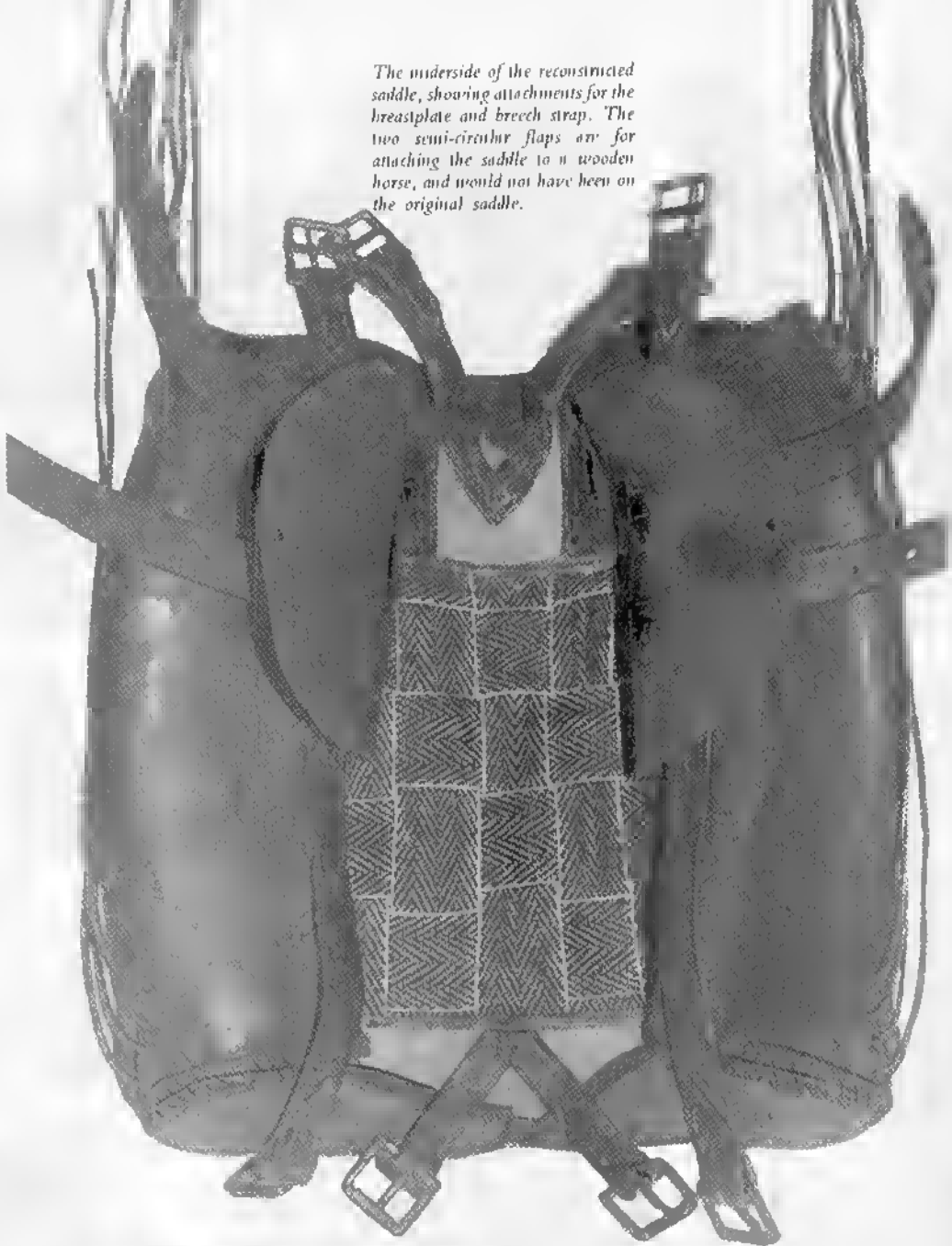
One could speculate that the names were put there by the bronzesmith to tell the saddler which saddle they were for; or, on the other hand, that the traces of leather were from an outer saddle cover. Since some of the horn plates have stitching holes and others nail holes, it is difficult to believe that they had any strengthening function. They must therefore have been either for shaping the horn on the inside, or for decoration on the outside.

My personal opinion, which is supported by one of the leading Roman leather experts, Dr. Carol van Driel-Murray of the University of Amsterdam, is that the wooden horns were covered with padding, held in place around them by strips of cloth or leather. The bronze plates were then either stitched to the padding, or nailed through it to the wood, their purpose being to give a smooth outer surface for the leather to be stretched over. The leather has to be soaked before fitting, and the bronze plates certainly made it a lot easier to get the wet leather over the horns.

Modifications

Since the initial saddle was built it has been considerably modified. The tree has been completely rebuilt, and now consists of two side boards joined by bridges at front and back (see colour plates, 8). This was how Frankish saddles were made. The seat is made of crossed webbing padded with felt. When removing the leather covering to modify the tree I found that the stitching had torn the leather where it had been sewn together under the saddle. Dr. van Driel-

The underside of the reconstructed saddle, showing attachments for the breastplate and breech strap. The two semi-circular flaps are for attaching the saddle to a wooden horse, and would not have been on the original saddle.



Right:

Rear view of the saddle, showing the position of the rider's seat lodged between the back horns.



Function

The main requirements of a saddle are that it provides a secure seat; and that it transfers the weight of the rider from the spine to the flanks of the horse. The latter is achieved by padding the underside of the side boards so that the centre of the saddle rises above the horse's spine, particularly at the withers (see colour plates, 9).

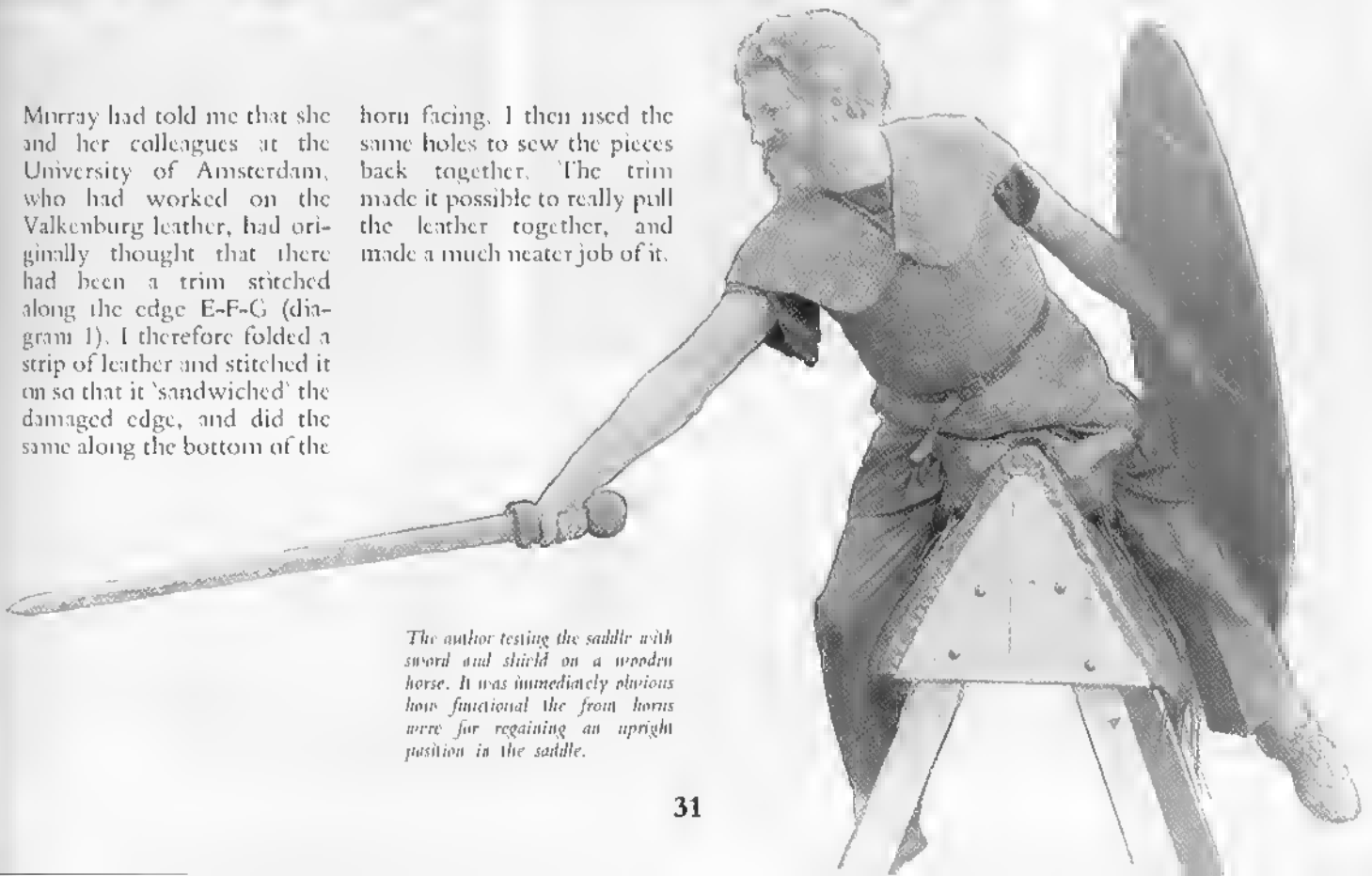
The function of the horns became obvious as soon as the saddle was made. When sitting on a horse the rider's legs splay out, so that if he slips back his hips become jammed between the back horns. The front horns prevent the rider from somersaulting out of the saddle backwards, or sliding forwards on to the horse's neck. (Similar projections, called 'swells', appear on Western saddles, and perform much the same function.) Later experiments showed that the front horns could just as easily be used to pull the rider upright in the

Above:

The author demonstrating to HRH The Princess Royal, on the occasion of her visit to the Institute of Archaeology in London in April 1987, the Roman method of vaulting into the saddle. This is much easier than it looks.

Murray had told me that she and her colleagues at the University of Amsterdam, who had worked on the Valkenburg leather, had originally thought that there had been a trim stitched along the edge E-F-G (diagram 1). I therefore folded a strip of leather and stitched it on so that it 'sandwiched' the damaged edge, and did the same along the bottom of the

horn facing. I then used the same holes to sew the pieces back together. The trim made it possible to really pull the leather together, and made a much neater job of it.



The author testing the saddle with sword and shield on a wooden horse. It was immediately obvious how functional the front horns were for regaining an upright position in the saddle.

saddle — e.g., when leaning out to the left, the right thigh can be used to pull oneself back in much the same way that stutups are used today. Some of the accompanying photographs demonstrate the support given by the horns.

Harnessing

Roman cavalry tombstones normally show the saddle held in place by a girth strap, breastplate and breech strap. The breastplate and breech strap, made of hide about 20mm wide and 4mm thick, are usually attached to the saddle at either one or two points. On the reconstructed saddle the leather did not quite cover the inner edges of the side boards, and it was possible to attach the girth strap, breastplate and breech strap to the side boards. A secondary attachment for the breastplate and breech strap was fixed to the centre of the front and back bridges of the tree (see underside photograph). This arrangement worked very effectively; we had expected that the breech strap might slip down, but it stayed up under the tail even when the horse was cantering.

A large number of harness decorations have been found, including many large decorated discs (see colour plates, 3B). These are elaborate strap junctions, and were probably only used for parades and 'cavalry sports'. The simpler ring junctions (see colour plates, 3A) were probably used for everyday work and for battle.

Mounting and dismounting

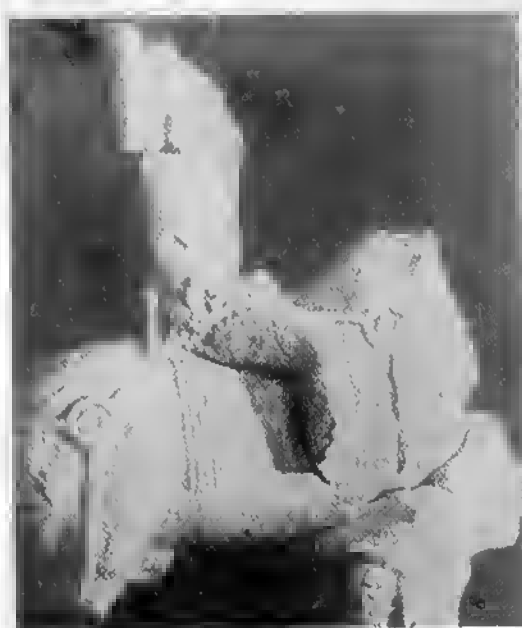
Mounting and dismounting caused me some concern at first. The ancient sources say that cavalymen had to learn to vault into the saddle; and the four horns made this a rather daunting prospect. Despite the pessimistic predictions of friends, it proved much easier than expected — at least when the saddle was on a wooden horse. We are told that Roman cavalymen learned to vault on wooden horses, but ultimately had to be able to vault into the

The saddle being tested by the writer Ann Hyland, an authority on many aspects of riding and horse breeding. As an accomplished Western rider, she recognised a similarity between the Roman and Western saddles, comparing it to a 'centing' saddle.



Below:

Side and three-quarter front views of a Gallo-Roman horseman from Vienne-en-Val in France. This sculpture shows quite clearly the different angles of the front and rear horns.



saddle from either side, fully armed, with the horse on the move.

The ancient sources do not mention dismounting. The first time I rode the saddle I found myself perched up on the horse's back with no apparent way of getting down. My tiding instructor suggested that I swing my right leg forwards over the horse's neck and slide down

its left side. Unfortunately, my clothing caught over the horns and left me hanging from the side of the horse ... Subsequently I found that it was easy to vault off by gripping the two front horns, leaning forward until the weight of the body was above the hands, and then swinging my right leg over the back of the horse, as if I was getting off a bicycle.

Conclusions

My experiments so far suggest that the Romans used a saddle with a rigid tree which gave them a secure seat, making shock tactics possible. The only advantages of stirrups are that they make it easier to mount, and that the rider can stand in them when rising up in the saddle to deliver a blow.

MI

REVIEWS

Osprey Men-at-Arms and Elite series: MAA all 48pp, 8pp col. illus., approx. 40 b/w illus., £4.50 ea.; Elite all 64pp, 12pp col. illus., approx. 50 b/w illus., £5.50 ea.; available in case of difficulty direct from George Philip Services, Freeport, Littlehampton, W. Sussex BN17 5BR (plus 15% P&P).

Published January: Elite 14 'The British Army in the 1980s', 15 'The Armada Campaign 1588', 16 'NATO Armies Today'.

The British Army title is written and illustrated by Michael Chappell, so we may rely upon the detail of uniform. This is a reference book, mainly valuable for actually listing the exact details of all official 'orders of dress' from No. 1 to No. 11 Dress, and the brain-numbingly intricate differences of unit 'tribal items' — though Mr. Chappell does include an interesting insider's view on the surreal regimental system. The plates are interesting but useful, being examples of the different 'orders of dress', some of which are inevitably dull. Osprey's colour reproduction seems unequal in the subtlety of some of the pale tints.

The Armada title is by an author new to this reviewer, John Tierney, and illustrated by Richard Hook. The story of the background and course of the Armada expedition is well and succinctly told; but the main interest lies in detailed analysis of the two armies — Parma's Army of Flanders, waiting to be picked up for the invasion phase, and the English defensive forces assembling to meet them. Here Mr. Tierney's expertise really shows, in fascinating and highly relevant detail. His arguments on the question, 'Who would have won if the Armada had landed?' are convincing. The costume plates are very colourful, and seem suitably useful. Recommended.

The NATO volume is another digest of listed information rather than a narrative. It covers (in smaller type than usual, we note) an extraordinarily wide field. The armies of Norway, Denmark, Canada, Belgium, Holland, France, Luxembourg, W. Germany, Italy, Greece, Turkey, Spain, Portugal and Iceland are listed, with brief 'narratives', and, in the long plates commemorating, basic dress and insignia practices, covering both service and combat uniforms. Nigel Thomas's text is packed with information, and Ron Volstad's plates include some attractive and unusual subjects, particularly among the 'survival' armies. While a book on such a huge subject can only hope to provide the simplest introduction in so few pages, this is an impressive effort and a handy reference.

Published March: MAA 194 'Arab Armies of the Middle East Wars (2)' by Samuel Katz, plates Ron Volstad. Broad coverage of Egyptian, Jordanian and Syrian

armies since 1967; and good on the different Palestinian guerrilla and Lebanese militia groups, and their paymasters. Mr. Volstad's plates are well up to standard, a positive feast of camouflage patterns and vulgarly coloured berets offering much that seems genuinely new. The Israeli author gives fair credit where it is due.

MAA 195 'Hungary and the Fall of Eastern Europe 1000-1568' by David Nicolle, plates Angus McBride. The usual dense, rich mixture from this established team, and most useful and attractive it is. Compressing five centuries of the highly complex military history of the whole of south-eastern Europe into 48 pages would demand a lesser man than Dr. Nicolle; but from the first page we are off, struggling to keep hold as he takes us on a lightning tour through the organisation, tactics, armour and weapons of one army after another, one dynasty after another. His illustrations are the usual mixture of careful line drawings of archaeological finds and architecture, photos of surviving items and buildings, and MS illustrations. The talents of Mr. McBride work perfectly the extraordinary gallery of exotics assembled in the colour plates for our pleasure and instruction. Recommended.

MAA 197 'Royal Canadian Mounted Police 1873-1987' by David Ross & Robin May, plates Richard Hook. 'Virtuaries' will bless Osprey for this (first?) detailed account of Mounted uniform regulations, supported by a really excellent selection of rare early photos and an attractive set of plates, themselves supported by clear photos of surviving uniform items. The strongly military nature of the Force, and its early tasks, clearly qualify the RCMP for inclusion in this series; and some of the 19th century personalities all too briefly touched upon here are suitably larger than life. An unusual subject, well handled; recommended.



MAA 198 'The British Army on Campaign 1816-1902 (3): 1856-1881' by Michael Barthorp, plates Pierre Turner. Follows the format of the two previous titles: interesting section on fighting tactics, very useful chronology of campaigns with regimental battle-honours, and painstaking explanation of regulation and campaign uniform practices, unit-specific, with meticulously listed winners. No colonial warfare student should miss this series; recommended. Plate D has printed for the blue in the review copy: we understand an erratum note will clarify this in the forthcoming Vol. 4.

Generally speaking Osprey continue to produce an excellent, diverse series of titles at very reasonable cost; but they must pay close attention to the fidelity of colour reproduction, which seems rather variable recently. JS



'The British Soldier in the 20th Century (3): Personal Equipment, 1945 to the Present Day' by Michael Chappell; Wessex Military Publishing, 1A High St., Hatherleigh, Devon EX20 3JH; 24pp; 24 b/w illus., 4pp col.; p/bk; £3.50, plus 50p UK P&P; available in USA from Bill Dear Books Ltd.

As in previous titles in this new series, Mike Chappell brings to this book a fund of practical experience and knowledge. It is well illustrated, with informative captions. While '44 and '58 pattern equipment are well covered, the problems with PLCE '80 (e.g. plastic buckles which fracture in the Arctic) are not addressed; and the 'new respirator' could better have been identified as the S10, with its drinking facility described. Though a high content of large pictures is clearly series policy, this reviewer would prefer more text — the author/artist knows his subject from first-hand experience, and it is a pity he has not found room for more descriptive detail. Nevertheless, a most attractive booklet, and good value for money.

EWFW

'The Autobiography of Sergeant William Lawrence ...', ed. George Nugent Banks; facsimile reprint of 1886 edn. by Ken Trotman Ltd., Unit 11, 135 Ditton Walk, Cambridge CB5 8QD; 250pp; p/bk; £12.50

The tenth in this publisher's immensely valuable 'Military History Monographs' is the famous memoir of a Peninsular and Waterloo veteran from the ranks of the 40th Foot. It has been much anthologised, for its wealth of striking quotations and its useful factual details of campaign life; but the whole book is still an almost essential addition to any self-respecting collection of British Napoleonic period references.

Lawrence was a thoroughly brutalised old scoundrel, and it is hard to actually like the character revealed by his memoir, dictated in later years with an unblinking honesty. But if we finish at his matter-of-fact anecdotes of gallows humour in the midst of carnage, and of merciless robbery of the mutilated and lying on the field, it is impossible not to respect the sheer hardness of the man — and, by extension, of Wellington's redcoats as a whole. The lack of drama with which he recounts horrors birthed, and suffered personally, is a useful corrective to our habit of judging historical events by 20th century standards of sensitivity. A fascinating book, highly recommended. MCW

'A Collector's Guide to Third Reich Militaria' by Robin Lumsden; Ian Allan Ltd.; 192pp; 184 b/w photos plus line illus.; p/bk, £5.95

The author has attempted to do, in one pocket-sized volume, with a wide range of items. The book is divided into five main sections on Orders and Decorations, Dress Daggers, Headgear, Tunics, and Miscellaneous Militaria. Each section is subdivided in turn into an extensive range of subjects; and in four out of the five main sections will be found advice on restoration, preservation and display, as well as notes on availability and prices.

In this reviewer's opinion the photographs leave a lot to be desired. They are not, in many cases, of the highest quality, a number are mislabeled, and most have been taken of items set against an aggravating backdrop of heavily ribbed material. The line drawings lack accurate detail, and would have been better executed by a professional artist: they do not impart much in the way of information. Equally, it must be said that a lot of the information in this book is familiar from other sources. However, criticism apart, at the comparatively low price this book will certainly find a ready market.

BLD

'War Cars: British Armoured Cars in the First World War' by David Fletcher; HMSO; 104pp, illustrated throughout; p/bk; £7.50

David Fletcher has succeeded in producing a most interesting and readable book which will be enjoyed by the general reader; welcomed by those with an interest in vintage vehicles; and consulted regularly by military historians concerned with the British Army's early ventures into mechanised warfare. He provides some fascinating details of early attempts to apply locomotion, including the Pennington and Sims War Cars and the Fowler steam road-trains; and continues with chapters on the RNAS, the transfer of responsibility to the Army in 1915, motorcycle MG units, anti-aircraft vehicles, Commonwealth contributions, and immediate post-war operations. The appendix gives a valuable summary of unit histories, based on research by Charles Messenger. The book contains almost 200 illustrations, including photos, plans, war artists' impressions, and even cartoons, few of which have been published before. Despite the wide scope of the book, there are very few aspects of this text which might be regarded as open to debate. A worthy addition to any military library, and essential reading for every AFV enthusiast. **BP**

'Military Pistols and Revolvers' by Ian Hogg; Arms & Armour Press; 128pp; 125 b/w illus.; index, appendices; £10.95

To make interesting reading of what is essentially a historical catalogue of pistols and revolvers is no easy task. However, Ian Hogg — whose technical pedigree is beyond question — has achieved a coherent chronological treatment seldom found in this type of book. With one or two exceptions, he refrains from wittering on about the sort of technicalities only accessible to those few potential readers with practical experience of firearms design, repair or maintenance.

Instead, he maps a fascinating journey, starting with Samuel Colt

(or 'Doctor Colt', purveyor of patent medicines, as he had once been in his formative years) and his early forays into revolver design. We are led on through Smith & Wesson, Remington, and other well-known names. We are given a basic run-down on the contribution of John Moses Browning, the grandfather of firearms designers, whose auto pistol principles still form the basis of enormous numbers of models in use today.

Limitations of space and price mean that the reader has to move on just as the historical appetite has been whetted, and I found this frustrating, which is in itself a tribute to Hogg's writing. Should Arms & Armour Press ever decide to 're-update' this updated version of Hogg's 1970 edition, I feel it could with advantage be expanded by the inclusion of more personal anecdotes about some of the more famous weapons. (Churchill's letter to his mother after Omdurman, describing the use of his newly-acquired Mauser, for instance, is well known to aficionados, but would make interesting reading for the wider and less specialised readership at whom this book is presumably aimed.)

The illustrations come from several different sources, and are mostly quite clear. (However, the one close-up picture of the S&W triple lock is cropped too short to show the shroud which was the significantly different aspect; and on the following page is illustrated in full, but without a caption reference to the triple lock ... bit silly?). If I have a slight niggle about the illustrations, it would be the over-coverage of Luger variants, of which there is an enormous reference available in other books.

For those who want the really technical stuff, the final pages are full of tabulated data on both the weapons and their ammunition, and a historical index of the major nations' service pistols and revolvers over the whole period.

This book is ideal for someone with a basic knowledge and interest who wants a historical overview, presented in an easy-to-read but highly informative way. Two and three-quarter cheers for Arms & Armour Press. **JD**

'Badges of the British Army, 1820 to the Present' by Frederick Wilkinson; Arms and Armour Press; 84pp, 56pp b/w illus.; index; £7.95

Though sub-titled 'An Illustrated Reference Guide for Collectors, with 1987/88 price guide', this book gives the impression that it might more accurately be described as one man's collection (and what a nice collection). For a book first published in 1969, one feels that it could be more wide-ranging if it claims to be a reference guide. It must be recognised, however, that no single work can take in such a large subject, and this beautifully illustrated book is a valuable guide for both the experienced and the novice collector.

The short introduction is a model of good sense; but the lack of accurate descriptions for many of the plates is a continual annoyance, as is the absence of any scale to indicate the comparative sizes of the badges.

The author highlights two problems for collectors: restrikes, and 'stayrite'. Personally I regard restrikes just as the serious collector of Georgian silver may regard a 'reproduction Georgian' item; but to include a restrike in a collection when one badge of a series is missing is often the only way to complete an interesting set. The problem of 'stayrite' shows up very clearly in the photographs: it cannot be effectively photographed alongside the real thing.

The author admits that the price guide should be treated with caution: in my collection, as in so many others, some items are priceless, because I know the history of some of the men who wore the badges which I was given as a boy. But that is not to say that the price list is not of use: it gives useful indications in a clear layout which makes reference easy. Values are based on rarity, and badges from a small or short-lived unit will always out-value comparatively more common items.

This is a useful handbook for the collector, and an essential addition to any reference library. (It leaves me with one unanswered question: who were the 'Army Scripture Readers', and where did they wear their badge of 'ASR' surrounded by a three-quarter laurel wreath?) **RMDS**

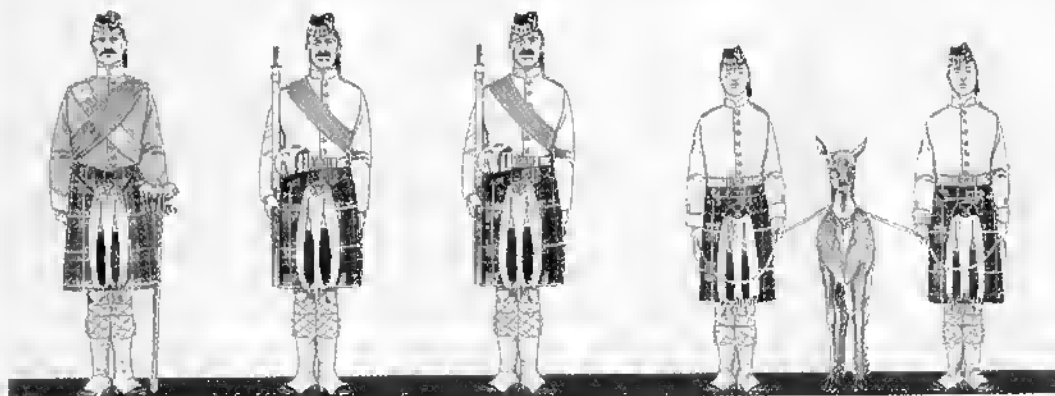
'Battle in Africa 1879-1914' by Howard Whitehouse, illus. by Peter Dennis; Field Books, Fieldhead, The Park, Mansfield, Notts NG18 2AT; 48pp, illus. throughout; p/bk; £4.95 (incl. P&P in UK)

This is the second in Field Books' 'Battle' series, their previous *Battle in the US Civil War* having been well received. This title applies the same format to an analysis of late Victorian colonial warfare, taking the reader systematically through each stage of an African campaign. It describes how an army was raised, how it was supplied, how it moved to confront the enemy strategically and tactically, how it functioned in battle; the rôle of command; and the treatment of casualties. 'An African campaign' should perhaps be qualified — the book is largely comparative, taking its examples from a range of campaigns, with particular emphasis on the author's speciality, the Sudan. The battle of Tamai, March 1884, is taken as an example of how tactical concepts functioned in practice in the African context.

One of the book's great strengths is the thoroughness of its consideration of the African enemy, unusual in a work aimed at the popular end of the market (there is no doubt that wargamers will find a great deal to interest them here); too often the Africans on the receiving end of European colonial might are written off as exotic cannon-fodder. A certain amount of care is evident in the illustrations, showing Mahdists, Zulus, Abyssinians, Boers and others in the correct dress of the day.

It's worth saying, incidentally, that the illustrations are more than just attractive space-fillers. There are some excellent diagrammatic sketches of orders of march and tactical procedures; and a nice series seen 'over the rifle sights' showing what a charge actually looked like as the range closed, and the effectiveness of firepower at each stage.

No justification is given for the choice of bracketing dates, but this is presumably to limit the wars covered to those fought in relatively open terrain. It excludes forest warfare in the 1874 Ashanti campaign, and bush warfare in 1877 on the Eastern Cape Frontier. There is a certain similarity between the tactical problems faced when confronting Zulu and Mahdist mass charges. I am not certain that enough attention is given to the changes of outlook needed to tackle the Boers. In attempting to cover all European powers — Germany, Portugal and Italy as well as Britain and France — in the whole of Africa, the authors may be accused of having bitten off more than they can comfortably chew. The British Army, in particular, had to adapt to a very wide range of types of warfare over this period, with mixed results; and



Part of D. Cuno's sheet of *Seaforth Highlanders* in his 'Victorian Soldiers' series of 'paper soldiers' reviewed here.

a book of this size (though benefiting from large page size and spacious layout) cannot come to grips with all the reasons for success and failure under differing tactical conditions, any more than it can successfully compare, e.g., the different experience of firearms of the Zulus and Ashanti in one brief paragraph. Nor is there space to consider evolution within Africa armies over this period — the guerrilla tactics of Bambatha's Zulus in 1906 were markedly different from the old mass charges of 1879.

In fairness, however, *Battle in Africa* knows its limitations, and does not attempt to wallow out of its depth. It is an excellent summary of military experience over its chosen period, which is thorough and unpatronising towards its subjects. It has a great deal to offer even established students of the period; and at only £4.95 is certainly excellent value for money. **IK**

CARDS AND PRINTS

'Victorian Soldiers (The British Army in the 1900s)' by Luis Reyes & Dionisio Cueto; available from them at Marques de Urquijo 40, 28008 Madrid, Spain; SAE for catalogue to M. de Luis, Flat 6, 6 Strathray Gdns., London NW3 4NY; set of 8 plates, P&P inclusive, £12.75

The Spanish writer Luis Reyes, and his artist partner Dionisio Cueto, have produced in collaboration a number of coloured sets of uniform cards in the classic tradition of the famous 'Strasbourg paper soldiers'.

During the French Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars, Strasbourg became the seat of a tradition. A baker named Boersch began, as a pastime, cutting out and painting pasteboard figures of the soldiers whom he saw passing through this strategic city on their way to the Rhine. This was the beginning of the tradition which led to such great collections of 'Strasbourg paper soldiers' as those of Wuriz and Carl, which have been the basis of much source material on Napoleonic uniforms. In the 1830s the tradition was continued and expanded by various members of the Pellerin family of Epinal, culminating in the production of hundreds of sheets of gaily-coloured soldiers of all nations — even including Chinese. Since then, there have been many imitators of the old Strasbourg style, including producers of sets in Italy and Austria; in more recent years our own René North, Lt.Col. J.B.R. Nicholson and the late Lt.Col. Olaf Macleod also experimented with various techniques to produce 'cut-out' soldiers.

The 'Victorian Soldiers' collection consists of three sets each of eight sheets covering the Foot Guards, Fusilier Regiments, and Infantry of the Line (including Highlanders). The first series is now available, and includes the Grenadier, Coldstream and Scots Guards, the Royal Scots, the Warwickshire Regt., the Border Regt., the Seaforth and the Argylls. Each sheet measures 29cm x 22.5cm

(virtually A4, the size of this magazine) of good quality card, supplied in a decorative cover, with a good text in a separate booklet. Each sheet has 18 figures (six each in three rows) each 70mm high; they are carefully designed to capture the feeling of the period, and to cover as wide a range of uniforms as possible. The figures are carefully drawn and crisply coloured. They capture the shape and style of British uniforms of the period, and the Foot Guards are particularly attractive.

The next two series will appear this spring and summer. Prices are discounted for multiple orders: £12.50 per set for five sets, £12.00 for ten sets. The overall production is colourful and inventive and, at around £1.60 a sheet, relatively inexpensive. Messrs. Curran and Reyes deserve success. **SC**



Bryan Foster's officer, 1854, from Pompadour Gallery's Set 8, 'The Grenadier Guards'.

Pompadour Gallery Uniform Postcards, Sets No.8 'Grenadier Guards' and No.9 'London's Metropolitan Police'; six coloured postcards in each set; available from The Pompadour Gallery, Fairview Parade, Mawney Road, Romford, Essex RM7 7HH; prices inc. P&P, £2.00 per set (UK/EEC), or £2.75 (overseas airmail)

This attractive series of cards, printed from original paintings by Bryan Foster, continues with two very different sets. The Grenadiers set comprises a Grenadier, 1751; Sergeant, 1815; Officer, 1854; Private, 1900; Officer, Arm'd. Div., 1944; and RSM, 1987. The novel 'Met set' includes Constables or Sergeants over the whole span from the original 1829 'Preler' to the PC of 1987. All the figures in both sets are placed against well-researched 'street' backgrounds, which we found most attractive. The standard of this series is being maintained; we have no hesitation in recommending them. **MCW**

We have also received:

'A Field-Marshal in the Family' by Brian Montgomery (Javelin p/bk, £5.95), a memoir by Monty's younger brother.

LETTERS

We will be glad to publish readers' letters which advance the information given in our articles; and to pass on to contributors queries more suitably dealt with by private correspondence. We reserve the right to select, for reasons of space, only the most relevant passages for publication. Please address letters to our editorial box number, given on page 5, and mark envelope 'Letters'.

Comandante insignia

May I make some small corrections to and additional comments on the *Commando Distinctions* piece in 'MI' No. 11, regarding Polish commandos of 6 Troop, 10 Cdo. (Page 10): men were selected from the 1st Infantry Brigade, not Battalion. Collar patches were dark blue, edged green, not green edged darker green. (Page 11, caption): the lanyard is the Norwegian red/white/blue unit award for Narvik given to the Independent Highland Rifle Bde., retained through various re-organisations and finally to be worn by the Highland Rifle Bn. of 1st Arm'd. Div.; Narvik veterans had a knot tied in the lanyard, with a gold Norwegian lion shield attached. Strictly, the commando should not be wearing it, as it was a unit award: perhaps he considered himself merely 'on secondment' to the commandos — the lanyard certainly had a prestige value.

K. Barbarski
Purley,
Surrey

While welcoming William Y. Carman's article on the much-neglected subject of Army Commando insignia, I feel that comment is warranted on some of the statements made.

The claim (actually, only a suggestion — Ed.) that Army Commandos cut the Combined Operations badge into a circle in order to deliberately distinguish themselves from RM Commandos is not supported by the photographic evidence... that the badge was worn in disc form by both Army and RM Commandos...



Mention is made of other miscellaneous units such as 14, 30 and 62 Commandos with the comment that no unit distinctions are known... 30 Cdo., also known as Special Engineering Unit, 30 Assault Unit or Admiralty Intelligence Unit, wore a dark blue square with a white or (?)pale blue number '30'. An excellent photograph appears in *The Commandos 1940-46* by Charles Messenger. **R.E. Flook**
Bath, Avon

American Revolution re-enactors

As a member of the 43rd Regt. of Foot (and a subscriber to 'MI'), I wish to thank all concerned for the hospitality and kindness shown us on our visit to the UK in August 1987 (see 'MI' No. 10). I also wish to thank you for the fine article and comments on our efforts during the tour; and to state that when you have an interested audience you always try to do your best. We appreciated the fine reception. **Charles P. Slavin**
Philadelphia, PA

43rd Highland Regiment

I found Philip Haythornthwaite's article on the First Highland Regiment ('MI' No. 10) most interesting, especially his references to the wearing of the belted plaid. He states that the print of Samuel McPherson by G. Bickham shows the kilt incorrectly divided at the front, and the plaid looped to the right shoulder instead of the left. It appears a very accurate print to me; and, by his equipment, is not reversed — it is a pity that the print does not include the lock of the fusil... I have searched for any reference to McPherson being left-handed, as in the print he is drilling left-handed. Although his equipment, sword and dirk can only be worn as for a right-hander, he could still have looped his plaid to the right shoulder to give free play to his sword arm if he were left-handed. Can any of your readers help?

As to the divided plaid, John Telfer Dunbar's *History of Highland Dress* points out that many early illustrators had trouble understanding the belted plaid, but also that many fine paintings show the plaid worn in many different styles. [There are several references to] Highlanders pulling their kilts high to the groin before attacking and... to tucking their kilts into their belts and revealing their nakedness when charging. If we look at the Bickham print closely we can see that the kilt is pulled back up through the belt, perhaps to give free movement to the legs. I look forward to some feedback on this point.

Richard Barlett
Berwick 3806

Lance-corporal of the Polish 1st Highland Rifle Bn., 1st Highland Rifle Bde. in June 1942, showing the Narvik veterans' insignia attached to the Norwegian lanyard. (Courtesy K. Barbarski)



The Military Art of Richard Caton Woodville (2)

JOHN CANNING

Part 1 of this article, describing Caton Woodville's early life and his work for the *Illustrated London News* and other illustrated journals, as well as his early successes with canvases exhibited at the Royal Academy, appeared in 'MI' No.11.

Battle paintings, by definition, must almost invariably be the product of the painter's imagination, based upon descriptions of the general positions of men and topographical features by those who were actually present. In his *The Art of Painting in the Queen's Reign*, Alfred Temple wrote: 'In the case of R. Caton Woodville, the smallest hint, the merest sketch or description, is sufficient for him instantly to grasp in his mind's eye the panorama of the event, and with ready hand to set down with amazing rapidity his view of the scene. He does not study with the microscopic care [that] Cow, Crofts and Lady Butler are wont to do, the details of the events he pictures; but he leaves an admirable idea of the event itself, with presumably, in point of accuracy, a broad aspect of the actual occurrence.'

In describing his own method of painting, Caton Woodville declared that he had no system whatsoever. He tended to leave commissions until the last minute, and then to rush them — a

habit many working illustrators today will recognise with a flinch. He hardly ever made a correction; beginning at one corner of the picture, he ended at the other, diagonally opposite. He did observe, interestingly, that there were only two turning-points that a military artist should depict: the moment before action, and the moment of its result.

Among his best-known paintings are 'The Return from Metemneh'; 'Mairwand: Saving the Guns'; 'The Relief of Lucknow'; 'The Cock of the North' (the storming of Dargai Heights by 1st Bn. Gordon Highlanders); 'Bada-jos'; 'Fuentes Onoro'; 'Waterloo: The Whole Line Will Advance'; 'The Guards



Above:

A study for 'Taking a French Eagle by the Royals at Waterloo'; ILN, 7 December 1895. Typical small errors of uniform accuracy include omission of black tuft at front of helmet mane, itself left white; buttoned, unlaced jacket front (possibly a confusion between Waterloo and 1829 pattern); and gauntlets, instead of short white gloves worn with overalls.

at Tel-el-Kebir' (painted at the commission of Queen Victoria, and featuring the Duke of Connaught prominently, this now hangs at Windsor Castle); 'The Charge of the 21st Lancers at



Right:

'Charge of the Scots Greys, Waterloo'; ILN, 16 June 1894. Again, there are several inaccuracies of uniform detail, but the vigour of this cascade of big men on big horses is still seductive.

Left:

'Mairwand: Saving the Guns' (oil on canvas; 1882). With his 'Charge of the Light Brigade', probably Caton Woodville's most famous painting. (Walker Art Gallery; National Museums & Galleries on Merseyside)

Omdurman'; 'Halloween 1914'; and perhaps his most famous, 'The Charge of The Light Brigade', familiar to many modern readers from its use as the cover illustration of Cecil Woodham-Smith's *The Reason Why*.

Caton Woodville's work was extravagantly praised, by many critics whose knowledge of the realities of war was shallower than his own: 'There is scarcely a soldier, to say nothing of civilians, whose pulse does not beat higher as he looks on the realistic productions of Mr. Caton Woodville's wonderful brush' was one gratifying sentiment. Even the artist, however, must have felt over-ripe the assertion that 'Every hair of R. Caton Woodville's paint brush must have been plucked from the head of the god of war himself...'

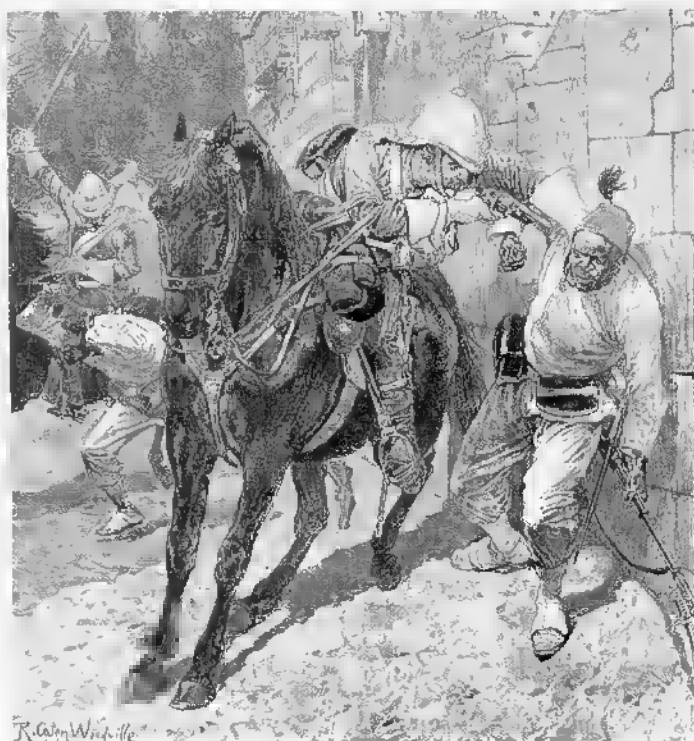
EXPERIENCE ABROAD

Caton Woodville's only direct military experience was as an officer, from 1879, in the Royal Berkshire Yeomanry, followed by a period with the Volunteer Royal Engineers (during which he commanded a field telegraph train), and finally as commander of the Torrington Troop of the Royal North Devon Hussars. As a correspondent he did, however, accompany several campaigns; but it is unlikely that he ever heard a shot fired in anger – at least, not at close quarters. He was an archetypal Victorian traveller of the robust, unreflective school, and physically brave; no doubt his failure to experience actual battle was a frustration to him, and his entry in *Who's Who* seems deliberately ambiguous on the point.

He went out to Egypt in

Below:

'The War in Egypt: Surrender!': *ILN*, 16 September 1882. The revolver is anachronistic, since the typically stalwart Anglo-Saxon Life Guards trooper terrifying his small opponent in this rather unattractive treatment is neither an officer, a senior NCO nor a trumpeter – a carbine would be correct. The study is otherwise convincing: the artist was himself in Egypt during the 1882 campaign.



1882 to cover Wolseley's campaign (he was commissioned by the Fine Art Society to paint the charge of the Household Brigade at Kassassin), but had the misfortune to break an ankle, and arrived after most of the action was over; he filled in time by designing uniforms for the Egyptian army. He observed the Turkish war of 1878, and other minor operations in Albania and the East generally. Despite the rather more generous definition of a correspondent's rôle in those days he must have been noticeably active, since he received French, Spanish, Turkish and Montenegrin decorations.

He also travelled in the United States; and it was while observing the 1890-91 operations which culminated in the events at Wounded Knee that he met Frederic Remington, the great American Western artist. Both loved the drama and freedom of outdoor life in the West; and both were inclined to leave out of their pictures the worst horrors of war.

At far as acquaintance with his French contemporaries went, it is known that Caton Woodville had the highest regard for the pictures of Meissonier. He praised them as 'full of character, each possessing qualities of



marked individuality – the outcome of employing models of diverse contour.' He admired the detail in the work of Detaille, but found his use of colour lacking in force. It was his opinion that Detaille would have benefited from a bit of De Nerville's 'dash and go' in his pictures. He seems to have been extremely taken with Alphonse de Neuville's paintings: he praised their dramatic force, and the feeling of vigorous action. It seems that this admiration was reciprocated, since at the time of De Neuville's death in 1885 the Frenchman owned a complete set of Caton Woodville's work which had appeared in the *Illustrated London News* up to that date.

* * *

At the court of Queen Victoria and her successors Caton Woodville was regarded with favour; and his bluff, kindly disposition earned him many influential friends. He was invited by Prince Albert Victor to accompany his party on a tour of India in 1889. Despite the daily distractions of elephant-catching, pig-sticking, and tiger-shoots he

found time to paint two life-size equestrian portraits, of the Nizam of Hyderabad and the Maharajah of Mysore. He was at various times commissioned to paint a number of royal portraits, including King Edward VII and King George V.

He continued to work for the *ILN* from his London studio, and in the closing years of the 19th century lived in some style in the fashionable St. John's Wood area. A jocular and 'clubbable' man, he cut a dapper figure among the officers, sportsmen and Bohemians of his social set. Royal favour brought him lucrative commissions at home and abroad, and his canvases commanded at least £1,000 – equivalent to perhaps twenty times that amount today.

In 1913 the artist had his memoirs published under the title *Randou Reminiscences*. The book offers the reader a series of amusing or thrilling tales of 'dancing, duelling, sport, fighting, murders, sudden death and hair-breadth escapes' – but curiously little about his art, which he keeps in the background. It is usually fatuous to attempt armchair psychoanalysis of the dead;



but it is hard not to wonder whether — like so many artists who become rich and well-known through satisfying a shrewdly recognised public taste for genre work — he secretly lacked confidence in his true talent.

The public mood during and after the Boer War was sufficiently jingoistic for Caton Woodville to continue to produce his essentially old-fashioned visions of warfare to general acclaim; but it is revealing that he wrote in 1913 of his dislike of painting soldiers in the new drab service dress: 'Our men in service kit remind one of navvies with a dash of the convict about them'.

It is his Great War paintings which strike a painfully false note. He continued to exhibit at the

Royal Academy throughout the war and after; but his Victorian triumphalist style was now transparently unsuitable for a new and grimmer age of mass warfare, whose horrors were fast becoming familiar to soldier and civilian alike. Fortunate in reaching the peak of his popularity at a time when the public enthusiasm for battle-pieces exactly matched his dashing and fluent style, Caton Woodville has suffered at the hands of later critics for the most poignant crime that an artist can commit: he outlived the fashion for his work.

In December 1926 Caton Woodville's wife died, and he apparently felt this personal tragedy very deeply. Despondent, and apparently feeling himself to be 'a

finished man', Richard Caton Woodville died by his own hand on 17 August 1927, at the age of 71. (His father had also committed suicide.) He left a son, William P. Caton Woodville, born in 1884, who also became an artist and illustrator.

Caton Woodville is remembered as an artist who, despite his lack of personal experience of battle, yet brought to his pictures all the dash and movement of war — and as an unselfconscious patriot whose illustrations were 'an artist's victory over many a British defeat'. **MI**

Note: The author would be happy to hear from any readers who collect Victorian military art or prints, for the purpose of research for an intended book on Victorian military art.

Left:

Highlanders were favourite subjects for heroic military art in the late Victorian period, not only because of the genuinely impressive passages of Scots arms which stud the record of these imperial campaigns, but also because of the romantic appeal of all things Scottish, encouraged by the Queen herself. These illustrations show 'Strathgordale Highlanders forcing Mahomed's Zorba in the Battle of Arbura', ILN, 7 May 1898; and the oft-painted spectacle of 'The Storming of Dargai Ridge: Piper Finlister Continuing to Play Though Wounded in Both Legs', ILN, 2 April 1898. The uniforms of the Gordons at Dargai are generally correct, though the caucuses in use in India in 1897 were square-shaped; the Gordons in fact wore 1888 equipment with 1894 pouches, not the 1882 equipment shown; and the battalion had discarded their neck-curtains by the date of this action. (In another rubbing, after a Melton Prior sketch, Caton Woodville correctly omits them.)

Sources:

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- Stearn, R.T., 'Caton Woodville: Victorian Military Artist', *Soldiers of the Queen* No.50, September 1987
- Temple, Alfred G., *The Art of Painting in the Queen's Reign* (London, 1896)
- Wilson, Arnold, *A Dictionary of British Military Painters* (F. Lewis, England, c.1977)
- The London Times*
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'The 9th Lancers at Moncel, 7 September 1914'; black and white print. The depiction of the uniforms and equipment is generally correct; it is the anachronistic treatment of a Great War theme which is so sadly dated and, with hindsight, distressing.



Austrian Infantry, c.1809

PHILIP J. HAYTHORNTHWAITE
Paintings by GERRY EMBLETON

The Austrian Empire was one of Napoleon's most implacable adversaries. Despite successive defeats (Marengo, 1800; Austerlitz, 1805; Wagram, 1809), Austria played a major rôle in the campaigns of 1813-14 which led to Napoleon's downfall. Throughout this period the Austrian military effort was founded upon the 63 regiments of line infantry, a number reduced to 55 in 1809 when their recruiting-grounds were lost by the surrender of Austrian territory after Wagram. Beset by the parsimony and strangulating conservatism of the Austrian military establishment, the infantry almost invariably fought with great discipline and resolution; and inflicted upon Napoleon his first major defeat, at Aspern-Essling in 1809.

The Austrian Empire consisted of vast territories, its military forces being divided for convenience into 'German' and 'Hungarian' units. The former included regiments whose recruiting-grounds were originally in the Austrian Netherlands, Bohemia, Galicia and northern Italy; the latter included units from Hungary, Croatia and Transylvania. Among the most significant distinctions between the two is the fact that 'German' regiments were raised by a mixture of conscription and voluntary enlistment, and Hungarian units were formed from recruits provided by their own *Diet* (parliament), whilst Italian, Netherlands and Tyrolean regiments relied exclusively on free enlistment. Perhaps as many as half the 'German' recruits were volunteers from the smaller south German states attracted by generous bounties. Such men were regarded as the best in the army, and because of their greater degree of literacy than found among Austrian subjects they provided more than half of the army's NCOs.

Regimental establishment Each regiment was controlled by a 'proprietor' or *Inhaber*, a colonel-in-chief whose powers extended even to the appointment of officers below field rank. Although regiments were numbered, it was usual for them to be known by the title of the *Inhaber*—creating confusion when changes of *Inhaber* resulted in the same regiment bearing several titles during a short period, or when the *Inhaber* relinquished one regiment and took over another. For example, Regt. No. 41 was known as 'Bender' from 1778 to 1797, 'Württemberg' 1803-04, 'Saxe-Hildburghausen' 1805, 'Kottulinsky' 1808-1814, and 'Hohenlohe-Bartenstein' 1815-16. (It had no *Inhaber* in 1797-1802 and 1806-08). Similarly, at Austerlitz Regt. No. 55 was styled 'Reuss-Greiz' after its *Inhaber*, Prince Henry XIII of that state; but the regiment was disbanded in 1809, whereupon the title transferred to Regt. No. 18, which had been known previously as 'Stuart' and later 'd'Aspre'.

Regimental organisation remained reasonably standard throughout the period, consisting of two field battalions each of six fusilier companies, and a third or garrison battalion of four companies which served as a *depôt* for the field battalions; in addition, each regiment had a 'division' of two grenadier companies, which in wartime were usually detached and formed with the grenadiers of other regiments into composite grenadier battalions. Hungarian regiments had three field battalions with a total establishment of 5,508 men; German regiments had a nominal strength of 4,575 men, but in peacetime especially this was often reduced to as little as half that figure: fusilier companies with a 'war' establishment of four officers and 230 men often had as few as three officers and 120 men. Grenadier companies were nominally 112 strong, about 140 in wartime. The wartime increase was achieved by recalling men on furlough and those officially enlisted but permitted to follow their

civilian occupations until required. In addition, regiments had a *Reserve* division of 720 men (620 for Hungarians) to be used as a reservoir of personnel, and from 1808 German regiments possessed two reserve battalions of men whose conscription to active service had been deferred.

A hasty re-organisation was attempted in 1805, by which each regiment was to be arranged in one grenadier and four fusilier battalions, each of four companies of 160 men; but, being introduced immediately before the 1805 campaign, this step only caused confusion, so that 'common soldiers no longer knew their officers and the officers did not know their men'.

Austria's most capable general, Archduke Charles, appears never to have implemented the change in the forces under his control; and the previous organisation was re-instituted in 1807, save that peace and war establishments would henceforth be the same, except that in wartime the third battalion would be augmented to six



German fusilier officers in 1798 uniform, which continued in use as late as 1809, characterised by the crested leather helmet with large brass front-plate. For field officers the crest was in gold tool, for lower ranks, in silk. (R. von Ottenfeld).

companies. After the 1809 defeat third battalions were reduced to cadres, German companies to about 60 rank and file and Hungarian to 100. From 1811, regimental fourth battalions were formed by affiliating the *Landwehr* (militia) to the German regiments; Hungary possessed no *Landwehr*, her home defence forces being the old feudal levy or *Insurrectio*, and it was thought unwise to form *Landwehr* in Galicia, whose inhabitants were thought to be disaffected.

THE UNIFORMS

Throughout the Napoleonic era, the Austrian infantry presented a smart and well-disciplined appearance; as Sir Charles Stewart wrote in 1813, their 'military air that marked the soldier, especially the Hungarian, must ever fix it in my recollection as the finest army of the continent'.

The infantry uniform was extremely smart, the more so because it was very plain with few unnecessary embellishments, and included the most modern design of jacket worn by any European army, for which reason it was copied by Britain. Single-breasted and closed to the waist, its skirts were neat from 1798, and became slightly smaller in 1808-09 when the turnbacks were reduced. (It was usual throughout for outdated uniforms to be worn out before the issue of new styles; for example, although the shako was authorised in 1806 it was not even worn by the majority in the 1809 campaign). The coat was in the traditional Austrian colour of white (for the rank-and-file actually off-white or even very pale grey), with ten white or yellow buttons on the breast. The collar (upright from 1798), turnbacks

and cuffs (fastened by two small buttons on the rear seam) were in the regimental facing-colour, which also appeared on the rear piping of the skirts (three vertical lines, reduced to two in 1808-09), the piping to the vertical pockets (with a single button), and on the shoulder straps, which were either facing-coloured with white piping or vice-versa. The buttons were plain, without regimental numbers.

The colour-schemes adopted meant that in theory no two regiments had the same combination of facing- and button-colour, which necessitated a large number of facing-colours which were described by such terms as 'crab red', 'parrot green', etc.; though in practice it is likely that batches of cloth might not be dyed exactly the same shade, and would fade on campaign, so that exact nuances of colour might be somewhat academic. Cuffs were plain for German regiments, but for Hungarians were pointed, with a single button and tassel-ended lace loop (known as *Bärenlatzen* or 'bear's-paw').

German regiments wore white breeches, black knee-gaiters and black boots; Hungarians were distinguished by light blue pantaloons with mixed black and yellow braid on the outer seams and as knots on the thigh, tucked into lace-up shoes with raised anklets.

Headdress

From 1798 the headdress was a crested black leather helmet with a yellow and black woollen comb, but this proved unsatisfactory and was replaced in August 1806 by a shako, 8 ins. high and one inch wider at the top than the bottom, made initially of black cloth (or cloth on leather) and of felt from 1810. On the front it bore a brass loop and button, and a pressed-brass cockade made to resemble pleated cloth, painted in the national colours of black and yellow; leather cockades and lace

Colour plate captions, pp.42-43:

(1) German grenadier, Regt. No. 10 (green facings, white buttons). The equipment is standard for grenadiers, including sabre and cartridge-box grenade.

(2) Hungarian grenadier officer, Regt. No.37 (poppy-red facings, yellow buttons). Officers' breeches-lace was 4-in. wide until the 1811 regulations specified 1½-in. lace, and 1-in. for field ranks.

(3) German grenadier, campaign dress. Note the cap-cover, and the facing coloured grenade to the rear of the collar-patch.

(4) German fusilier officer, wearing the Oberrock. The pistol holster slung on a strap over the shoulder was a common addition on campaign.

(5) German fusilier corporal, Regt. No.22 'Emperor' (yellow facings, white buttons). Note the rank distinction: the lace shako-band and the cane.

(6) Hungarian grenadier, Regt. No.39 (poppy-red facings, white buttons). Note the grenade badge on the shoulder belt, and the distinctive Hungarian legwear.

(a) Three grenadier caps, showing varieties of cloth rear patch and 'hog'.

(b) Cuffs of German regiments, left, and Hungarian (with *Bärenlatzen* lace), right.

(c) Officer's coat, Regt. No.17 (light brown facings, white buttons). This shows the unofficial coloured turnbacks.

(d) Drummer's 'wing'.

(e) German drummer's jacket, showing crenellated lace.

(f) Hungarian infantry jacket, Regt. No.19 (light blue facings, white buttons).

(g) German pioneer's jacket, Regt. No.27 ('Emperor yellow' facings, yellow buttons).

(h) German private's jacket, Regt. No. 49 (light pike grey facings, white buttons). It was noted in some cases that the light grey facings were scarcely distinguishable from the jacket colour.

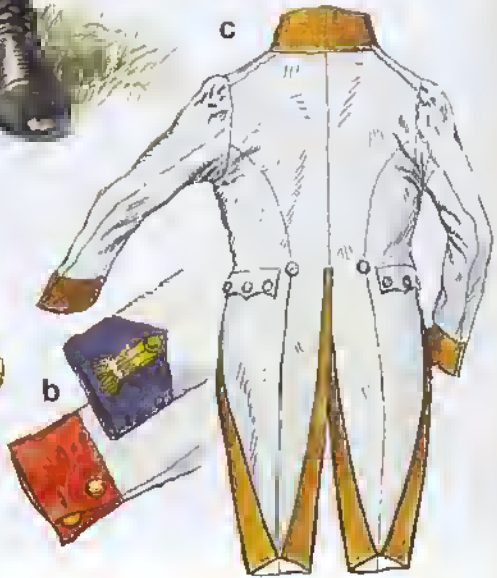
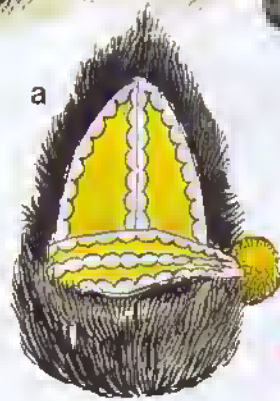
loops also existed. Above the cockade was a yellow woollen pompon with black centre; the chinstrap, front and narrow rear peak were black leather; and among recorded variations are some with small side-peaks to divert rainwater off the wearer's ears. First issued to

continued on page 44

Left:

Hungarian grenadier officer and private, c. 1805; the grenadier's belt bears a brass match-case. (R. von Ottenfeld).







GAE

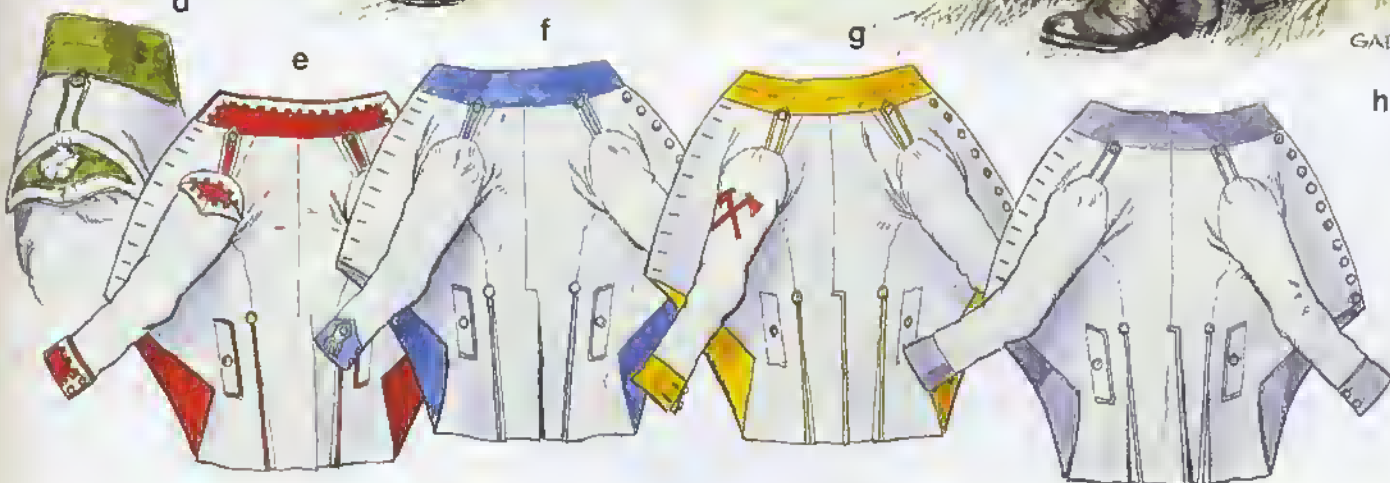
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Right:

German fusiliers in the post-1806 uniform, with officers in the Oberrock. Note how the drummer carries his knapsack over one shoulder, to allow the drum to be slung on his back on the march. (R. von Owenfeld).



Below:

The 1806 infantry uniform with shako; left to right: Hungarian fusilier; Hungarian fusilier officer; German fusilier officer, German fusilier NCO — note the coat suspended from the jacket button, the usual practice. (R. von Owenfeld).



Hungarian regiments, the shako was not universal until after the 1809 campaign.

Grenadiers wore a uniquely-shaped fur cap, nicknamed *fauteuil* ('armchair') by the French from its shape, with a high front and low rear, the rear with a cloth patch and usually a cloth 'bag' extending from left to right side. The yellow and black pompon was borne at the right, and on the front a large brass plate bearing a coat-of-arms, which existed

in several variations. The cap almost always had the 'nap' of the fur upswept. Between 1798 and 1805 a black leather peak was added (von Kobell c. 1806 shows peaked and peakless caps worn side-by-side); and some had small rear- and side-peaks, though these are not visible in many contemporary pictures (perhaps concealed by the fur). The cloth tear was originally in the facing colour, with wavy-edged white lace in various designs,

but the 1811 regulations specified yellow patches for all. Delays in implementing these orders result in contemporary pictures of 1813-14 continuing to show the old facing-coloured patches. Hair was worn in a powdered 'queue' until 1805.

Equipment

Equipment was white leather, the hide knapsack with shoulder straps connected by a breast strap; the greatcoat could be carried rolled atop the knapsack or bandolier fashion. White leather shoulder belts supported a black leather cartridge box on the right hip; grenadiers had a brass grenade-badge on the box, and a similar badge on the shoulder-belt, replacing the earlier brass match-case, perhaps after 1809. At the left hip was a brown leather bayonet scabbard and, for grenadiers, NCOs and musicians only, a sabre with brass stirrup hilt. A feature of Austrian scabbards was the extension of the leather over the top of the brass chape, showing a bulge at the end of the scabbard. The 1798 flintlock musket had brass fittings; its successor of 1807 was slightly lighter, with

iron fittings. A wooden canteen was carried over the shoulder, though latterly metal canteens came into increasing use.

Rank distinctions

NCOs' rank-distinctions were limited to the carrying of a sabre and a cane, and bands of ½-in. yellow lace around the shako: a single band for corporals, and for higher ranks (known as *Prünn Plann*), two bands.

Officers wore long-tailed coats with horizontal pockets and no shoulder straps. Officially the turnbacks were white, but several sources show the use of facing-coloured turnbacks, introduced either regimentally or by the personal preference of the individual. Buttons were gilt or silver, and the Hungarian *Bährutaten* in metallic lace. Officers wore breeches (with gold or silver braid for Hungarians) and boots (metallic-faced hussar boots could be worn by Hungarians). Around the waist was worn the universal mark of commissioned rank, the gold and black sash (*Felbünde*), in silk for field officers and camel-hair for others. To conserve the expensive white uniform, campaign officers frequently wore a double-breasted frock-coat (*Oberrock*), extending to mid-calf or less, in dark grey to almost black, with collar or collar and cuffs in the facing colour.

The sword was suspended from a waist belt, officially white leather with a gilt plate bearing the Imperial eagle, but many officers adopted the black-and-gold striped waist belt officially reserved for field ranks. The sword was a straight-bladed épée (*Degen*) with gilded fittings and black and gold knot, though grenadiers and Hungarians were permitted to carry curved sabres with gilt stirrup hilts, decorated as elaborately as they chose.

Instead of a rear peak, officers' shakos had an upturned dummy neck-guard at the rear, edged like the peak with ½-in. gold lace. Their pompon was gold with

a black velvet centre bearing the Emperor's cypher, and the cockade loop was gold with a gilt or silver button. Around the upper edge of the cap was gold rank-lace, a wide band for senior officers and two narrow bands for subalterns. Grenadier officers wore the fur cap with officers' pompon and gilt plate, but bicorne hats were equally popular for active service.

A traditional feature retained by the Austrian army until the 20th century was the use of the *Feldzeichen*, a sprig of green foliage in the headdress, a relic of the 'field sign' of the 17th century used to distinguish friend from foe in the days before recognisable national uniforms had evolved.

Regimental **bandsmen** often wore very elaborate uniform (dependent on the taste and finances of the *Leutnant*), but the drummers wore the ordinary uniform with the addition of facing-coloured 'swallows'-nest' style shoulder wings bearing a white lace rosette and edged with white crenellated or sometimes plain lace; similar lace might also be borne on the collar and cuffs.

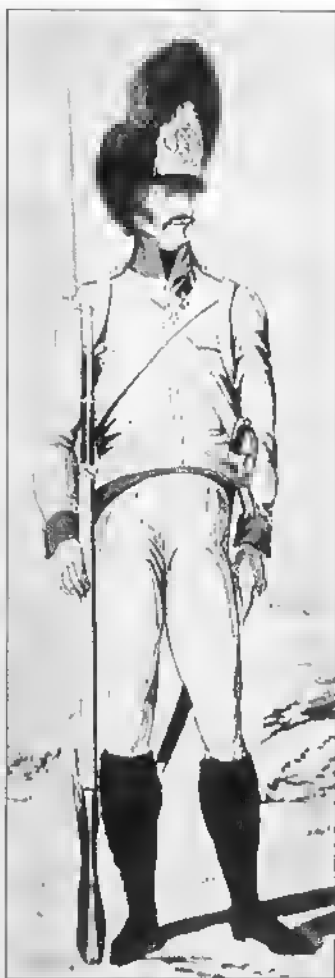
Pioneers were equipped with leather aprons and felling axes, and wore a red crossed-axes badge on the left upper arm.

The **greatcoat** was single-breasted with a standing collar and deep cuffs, greyish-brown, with facing-coloured piping on the collar and a shoulder-strap on the left (some sources show two shoulder straps); sometimes with a facing-coloured collar-patch and grenade for grenadiers. For campaign, grenadier caps might have a black waterproof cover, sometimes shown bearing a painted device on the front consisting of a yellow grenade with red flame, with the Imperial cypher 'FI' in yellow.

MI

Sources

The most accessible source for details of the Austrian infantry organisation and uniform is the present writer's *The Austrian Army of the Napoleonic Wars (I): Infantry*



German grenadier, c. 1808; note the grenade badge on the shoulder belt. (Piaquillo Molli).

(Osprey Men-at-Arms series No.176, London 1986). An invaluable study of the Austrian army in general is Napoleon's Great Adversaries: *The Archduke Charles and the Austrian Army 1792-1814* (G.E. Rothenberg, London 1982). The leading work on uniforms is still *Die Österreichische Armee* (R. von Ottenfeld & O. Teubner, Vienna 1895).



German grenadier, c.1814. (R. von Ottenfeld).



Left:

Grenadier accoutrements, including the distinctively-shaped cap, cartridge box with grenade badge, and sash.

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Simon Bolivar

IAN FLETCHER
Paintings by RON POULTER

On 15 August 1805 a young man knelt before a fountain on the Monte Sacro in Rome; crossed himself; and made a vow 'of whose faithful fulfilment the emancipation of South America is the glorious witness'. But though Simon Bolivar dedicated his life on that day to the cause of South American freedom from Spain, it was to take nearly 20 years, and many hard marches and dispiriting defeats, before final victory on the plains of Ayacucho.

Born in Caracas, Venezuela on 24 July 1783 the son of a wealthy father, Simon was educated by tutors who imbued him with the ideals of the European enlightenment. At sixteen he was sent to Madrid to complete his education; and took the opportunity to travel in Italy and France, where Napoleon's rise to power, apparently as a hero of the Revolution, deeply impressed him. At nineteen he took a young bride back to Caracas, but tragically she died of fever within the year. He returned to Europe in 1804, and witnessed Napoleon's coronation in Paris. To him this seemed a betrayal of the ideals of the Revolution: henceforward the man he had worshipped as 'the hero of the republic ... the genius of liberty' would be dismissed as a tyrant.

An oil painting of Bolivar by the Peruvian artist José Gil de Castro in 1825, which now hangs in the Federal Palace in Caracas. Bolivar is shown in a dark blue uniform with gold lace, white breeches and high boots. This is thought to be that of a general-in-chief of the Allied Armies, and was possibly worn by Bolivar alone. With it was worn a large red and gold belt, sword slings and scabbard.

THE FIRST CAMPAIGNS

With the French invasion of Spain in 1808, leading to the creation of a puppet monarchy and to a national uprising, Spanish American colonists saw their chance to

move from words to deeds. In 1810 Bolivar was active in the movement which deposed Spain's viceroy in Caracas. Despite the failure of his mission to London to plead for assistance, Bolivar — together with Francisco Miranda — persevered in the cause; and on 5 July 1811 a Venezuelan Congress declared national independence. Bolivar was given command of the vital port, Puerto Cabello; betrayed by a subordinate, he was driven out by the Spanish general Juan Domingo Monreverde, and forced to flee to Curacao.

Miranda lost heart; but in May 1813 Bolivar and a small rebel army defeated Monteverde at Lastaguanes, entering Caracas — to acclaim as *El Libertador* — on 6 August.

Less than a year later Bolivar was again forced to leave Caracas, defeated at La Puerta by José Tomas Boves and his *llaneros* — hard-bitten irregular horsemen from the plains, who took Caracas back into the royalist fold with great savagery. Bolivar fled to New Grenada (Colombia), where the revolutionary congress gave him another command. In April 1815 he was defeated at Santa Marta by Gen. Pablo Morillo's 10,000 battle-hardened troops, the first of many now released for American service by the fall of Napoleon. This time Bolivar fled to Jamaica; it was the lowest point in his fortunes.

Returning to Venezuela, he won a morale-boosting victory near Barcelona on 16 February 1817. By now recognised as the commander-in-chief of the patriot forces, he began to plan the strategy by which he would rid the continent of Spanish rule. In 1817-18 he consolidated his forces, along with those of other guerrilla leaders such as José Antonio Páez. He also recruited large numbers of unemployed ex-soldiers in Europe, including a strong British contingent, from among whom Bolivar formed a bodyguard.

Early in 1819 Bolivar was ready; he planned to cross the Andes and fall upon the Spanish forces in Colombia, and from there to attack Venezuela from the west. On 11 June 1819 his well-armed force began an epic march; they had to cross seven rivers across a flooded plain even before struggling up the icy pass of Pisba through the mountains. On 6 July the ragged little army came down into the valley of Sogamoso, to link with Francisco de Paula Santander's Colombian patriots. On 7 August at Boyaca they routed the Spanish Col. Barreiro's 2,400 men, taking





1,600 prisoners and much matériel; the British Legion distinguished themselves in repulsing enemy cavalry. Three days later Bolívar entered Bogota.

FROM CARABOBO TO AYACUCHO

After a brief truce the fighting resumed in mid-1821 with Bolívar's invasion of Venezuela. Now some 6,000 strong, the patriot army met Gen. Miguel de la Torre's 5,000 Spanish troops at Carabobo on 24 June. De la Torre held the southern end of the pass, but Bolívar sent his cavalry and the British veterans by a detour. Several patriot units fell back under fierce Spanish counter-attacks; but the British Legion stood firm despite heavy losses. They then launched a bayonet charge, in conjunction with Páez's cavalry; and by the end of the day the Spaniards had been routed for 20 miles. The campaign in the north was finally brought to a successful close by the victory at Pichincha in May 1822 of Bolívar's best lieutenant and close friend Antonio José de Sucre, leading one of two patriot columns into Ecuador.

While Bolívar had been

fighting in the north José de San Martín, his Argentine counterpart, had crossed the Andes to free first Chile in 1817-18, and then Peru in 1820; but the latter campaign was only a partial success, in that though the patriots held Lima royalist forces still dominated the highlands. Peru was the most loyal Spanish possession in South America, and victory would only be assured when the Spaniards had been driven from the whole country.

Bolívar needed San Martín's help; and on 26/27 July 1822 the two met at Guayaquil in Ecuador. The details of this historic but controversial meeting have never come to light; but immediately afterwards San Martín relinquished all control of his forces, and retired from the scene, leaving Bolívar to carry on the fight.

On 6 August 1824 Bolívar and Sucre defeated Spanish forces at Junín, about 100 miles north of Lima, in an exclusively cavalry battle in which not a single shot was fired — the action was fought entirely with sword and lance.

Although he knew that the decisive battle with the weakened Spanish forces in Peru was imminent, Bolívar

Another contemporary portrait of Bolívar by José Gil de Castro, Lima, 1825; it is known that he shaved off his moustache in mid-1825, so this presumably pre-dates the full length portrait. Decorated in essentially the same way as the other uniform, this different order of dress recalls that of a general-in-chief as described in dress regulations given in the General Headquarters at Caracas on 17 October 1813: '...blue coat with red collar, lapels and cuffs, gold buttons and gold palm and laurel on the cuffs, collar and lapels. Two gold epaulettes with three silver stars on top. Red trousers, waistcoat, and sash with gold tassels.'

was forced to return to Colombia at the critical moment to speed up the despatch of requested reinforcements. He left Sucre in command; and it was in Bolívar's absence that on 9 December 1824 Sucre led some 7,000 patriot troops to final victory over Gen. José de la Serna's 10,000 royalists at Ayacucho. Ayacucho, which crushed forever any hope of Spain regaining control of her South American colonies, was known as the 'battle of the generals': 14 Spanish generals were captured, and some 2,100 troops killed and wounded.

The remaining years of Bolívar's life were spent embroiled in the search for political solutions to post-revolutionary problems. Disappointed in his hopes of co-operation between the new free states, he resigned all powers in April 1830, an exhausted and disillusioned man. Leaving Bogotá for the Atlantic coast in May, he waited for a ship for Europe; but his deteriorating health forced him to rest at a country house near Santa Marta where, on 17 December 1830, Bolívar — *El Libertador* — died at the age of 47.

Sources:

- Salvador de Madariaga, *Bolívar* (London, 1952)
- Robert F. McNerney, *Bolívar and the War of Independence* (Texas, 1970)
- Richard Vawell, *Campaigns and Cruises in Venezuela and New Grenada, and in the Pacific Ocean, from 1817 to 1830* (London, 1831)
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- Rafael Bernal Madina, *Ruta de Bolívar* (Cali, 1949)

Ron Poulter's reconstructions on our back cover show

Bolívar (top left) in a uniform taken from one of the few contemporary paintings to show him mounted, a portrait by Ibarra which was in the possession of his sister, María Antonia Bolívar. The uniform is thought to be that of a general of Peru at the end of the War of Liberation in 1826. The coat is of the same pattern as that worn in the painting by José Gil de Castro reproduced here. An unusual feature is the way Bolívar is shown wearing his cocked-hat, from side to side and with no visible cockade, instead of 'fore and aft' as in most paintings, though this may be a distortion by the artist. In the mounted portrait the saddle is green laced with gold, over a dark blue saddle cloth edged in gold with three stars in the rear bottom corner, which is finished with a large gold tassel.

The figure at the right shows Bolívar in the uniform which he wore at the first meeting between him and the British Legion contingent in 1818, on the road between the River Apure and the city of Carabobo. Richard Vawell, an officer in the 1st Venezuelan Lancers, later wrote that Bolívar's dress 'corresponded perfectly with the scanty resources of the patriot army. His helmet was such as was then usually worn by a private light dragoon. It had been sent him as a pattern, by a merchant of Trinidad, who had imported on speculation from London some yeomanry accoutrements, which had been sold off on the commencement of the peace [i.e. in Europe]. A plain round jacket of blue cloth, with red cuffs, and three rows of gilt sugar-loaf buttons; coarse blue trousers; and alpargates, or sandals (the soles of which are made of the fibre of the aloe plaited), completed his dress. He carried in his hand a light lance, with a small black banner, having embroidered on it a white skull and crossed bones, with the motto "Muerte o Libertad!"

The lance Bolívar used was light and manageable, the shaft being of a tough and elastic black bamboo found in parts of the plains. It was customary for each commander to display a distinguishing swallow-tail pennon; the one described for Bolívar on this occasion was that of Gen. José Antonio Páez's Guard of Honour. During this period Bolívar is known to have worn his hair long and tied back with a black ribbon (reference Hippiusley, 1st Venezuelan Hussars).

J.L. Salcedo-Bastardo, *Bolívar, a Continent and its Destiny* (Richmond, 1977)

G.M. Hippiusley, *A Narrative of the Expedition to the Rivers Orinoco and Apure, in South America, which sailed from England in 1817* (London, 1819)

Simon Bolivar



1826



1818

RON FOLTER.